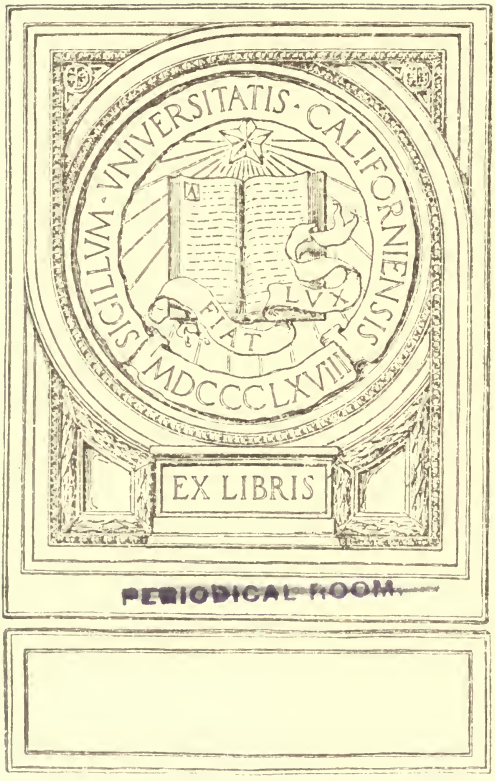

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WITH

NOTES AND QUERIES

Extra Number—No. 21

NARRATIVE OF NATHANIEL FANNING
Original 1806-08 *By Himself*

WILLIAM ABBATT
410 EAST 32D STREET ∴ ∴ NEW YORK
1913

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Nath.l Fanning

LIEUTENANT UNITED STATES NAVY.

FANNING'S NARRATIVE

THE MEMOIRS
OF
NATHANIEL FANNING
AN OFFICER OF THE AMERICAN NAVY
1778-1783

BY HIMSELF

NEW YORK { 1806 / 1808

NEW YORK
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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE

OF

CAPTAIN NATHANIEL FANNING,

AN

AMERICAN NAVAL OFFICER

WHO SERVED DURING

PART OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

COMMODORE JOHN PAUL JONES, Esq.,

AND WHO LATELY DIED AT CHARLESTON

IN THE

SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES

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NEW YORK PRINTED
1808

NARRATIVE

OF THE

ADVENTURES

OF AN

AMERICAN NAVY OFFICER

WHO SERVED DURING PART OF

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

UNDER THE COMMAND OF

CAPTAIN JOHN PAUL JONES, Esq.

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NEW YORK

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR

1806

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EDITOR'S PREFACE

Though the life of John Paul Jones has been written by several biographers, none of them have made much use of Fanning's *Narrative*, which is the most circumstantial account of the *Bon Homme Richard* and *Serapis* fight, and has the double advantage of being the first in point of time and the only one from the standpoint of any but a senior officer—Fanning being but a midshipman at the time and therefore seeing things from a point of view differing from Jones's or from Dale's as first lieutenant.

The "Narrative" apparently went through two editions (New York, 1806 and 1808); the first anonymously, the second under Fanning's name; but it is quite possible that they are one and the same, save for a different title-page and date, and the omission of twenty-one pages of scandalous matter.

It is one of the rarest items of Americana—Mr. Sabin catalogues but two copies, in the libraries of Harvard and the Boston Atheneum. The Editor has found a third—in the New York Society Library and a fourth was sold lately for $75. Buell, in his life of Jones, refers to an edition of 1825, published in New London, Conn., but as no such New London imprint is known to bibliographers he may be referring to the "Life of Commodore John Paul Jones and Memoirs of Captain Nathaniel Fanning, who served during part of the American Revolution, and died in the service of the United States, at Charleston, South Carolina. Lexington, Ky. Printed for W. Johnson, 1825."

We have had the opportunity of consulting the only copy of

this latter work known to us, which is in the possession of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

It contains 247 pages, of which Jones gets but 30, Fanning the rest. How it came to appear with a Kentucky imprint is an interesting question.

Fanning's own personality is interesting. From the book written by his brother Edmund* we learn that he was the oldest of the eight sons of Gilbert Fanning, of Stonington, Connecticut, where he was born May 31, 1755, and that he died at the Navy Yard, Charleston, S. C., September 30, 1805. At the time he was a lieutenant in our Navy.†

His story, apart from being the fullest account of the famous sea fight, is replete with interesting details of his subsequent experiences in France and as a privateersman in several different vessels. He observed carefully, and noted many circumstances which add to the interest of the story; but at the same time he inserts much matter unfit for publication, which we have been obliged to omit, as also an absurd love-story between fictitious personages.

Its date of composition is about 1801, as shown by his reference to Commodore Dale's appointment to the Mediterranean command, which was at that time; hence it is much more valuable than other and later publications, as written before Time had dulled recollection or produced the garrulity of age.

Judging from his experience, he would have made an excellent record in the War of 1812, had his life been spared to that time. As it is, it is extraordinary that none of his name are noticed in any of the encyclopaedias, save the Tory Edmund, Governor of North

* Voyages round the World, with selected sketches of Voyages to the South Seas, &c., performed under the Command and Agency of the Author, &c. New York, 1833 and '38.

† See Hamersley's list of officers of the Navy and Marine Corps.

Carolina (the all-around rascal David, of the same state, was not a relative): for, as the Fanning Genealogy points out, the family have been noted for their patriotism ever since the original settlement in America. We quote a paragraph (the list of patriot Fannings is too long for insertion):

> The Fannings were very zealous in their military and naval careers, and furnished a large quota of men for service in the wars of their country. Few families have contributed so largely to the Revolution as that of the Fannings, in many cases every male member of the family serving. By actual record over thirteen per cent. of the male descendants of Edmund Fanning did service in the various wars. John Fanning Watson, the historian, in a letter of 1835, says: "The Revolution destroyed the whole male part of John Fanning's family, and the country never bestowed one penny upon any of the heirs."
>
> What greater heroes are there than those who give their lives for their country? The old *Jersey*, the *Strombolo*, had their share of the Fannings. Could there be nobler heroes than those whose bones lay bleaching on the shores of the Wallabout?
>
> Whatever cause the Fannings upheld, they entered into with spirit, determination and patriotism. It has been said that no Fanning was ever a traitor to country or creed. Truly their lives were never peaceful, and their history is a story of confiscation, sacrifice and martyrdom from the earliest times.—*Fanning Genealogy, by W. F. Brooks*, 1906.

In personal appearance our hero is described as something of a dandy—always well-dressed, and somewhat given to self-approval; but that may be pardoned to one of his experiences. After his return from France he lived in New York City from 1792 to 1796, and again in 1798, then in his father's house (still standing) in Stonington, 1797, and 1802. In 1784 he married Elizabeth Smith, of Stonington, by whom he had six children, only one surviving infancy, Lavinia, who married Nathan Smith of Poquonnock, Conn. The present representatives are great grandchildren, Mr. Aborn Fanning Smith and Miss Adriana S. Marsh, both of New London, Conn.

His subsequent career is described in the following letter:

NAVY DEPARTMENT,
LIBRARY AND NAVAL WAR RECORDS,
WASHINGTON, D. C., SEPTEMBER 26, 1912.

DEAR SIR:

In reply to your letter requesting information regarding the commission, last

duty and death of Nathaniel Fanning, the following, taken from original documents, is furnished you;

Nathaniel Fanning was commissioned Lieutenant in the United States Navy December 4, 1804. His letter of acceptance, dated New York, December 12, 1804, encloses the "printed oath" duly signed before De Witt Clinton, Mayor of the City of New York. It is to be found in a collection of acceptances in this office.

In this letter Fanning says that he "shall embark for Charleston, S. C., in the first vessel which sails for that port, believing this to be the most expeditious way of getting there."

In an old volume entitled "Ships' Services," in a list of "gunboats builded," No. 9 was ordered to be built July 7, 1804, at Charleston, S. C., under the superintendency of Lieutenants Nathaniel Fanning and Wm. Smith, Sr. This gunboat was was launched March 4, 1805.

May 6, 1805, Lieutenant Nathaniel Fanning relieved Lieutenant Humphrey Magrath in command of Gunboat No. 1. This gunboat had been cruising in company with Gunboat No. 2 between Savannah and Georgetown, with orders to "protect the rights of the United States within their jurisdictional limits." While waiting to hear from the Governor of Georgia these gunboats were driven ashore and left dry in a cornfield on Whitemarsh Island. No. 1 was ordered to Charleston to be repaired and fitted for the Mediterranean Station. She proved not strong enough for the ocean voyage; but was repaired, and "the fixture of her gun altered," and on July 8, 1805, Lieutenant Fanning reported her as a safe boat to go "outside the bar of our harbors." She "continued off Fort Johnson," enforcing the quarantine laws of the state (South Carolina), and made short cruises until September 30, 1805, when Lieutenant Fanning died at Charleston, S. C.

Very respectfully yours,

CHARLES W. STEWART,
Superintendent Library and Naval War Records.

To his intimate relations with Jones, as his clerk, are due the anecdotes which show the noted fighter in a very unflattering light. His vanity and loquacity (which MacKenzie, in his *Life*, calls his chief defects) and general "bumptiousness," his arrogant treatment of officers and men alike, leave us nothing to admire save the two qualities which constitute his fame—courage and seamanship. Taken as a whole the "Narrative" is a valuable contribution to the history of its time, and we are confident our subscribers will so approve it. The spelling, as a rule, has been corrected, except where the error is so plain as to correct itself.

For the portrait and autograph of the hero, we are indebted to the kindness of Mr. Walter F. Brooks of Worcester, Mass., the author of the Fanning *Genealogy*.

EDITOR.

DEDICATION

TO JOHN JACKSON, Esq.,

SIR,

AFTER a careful perusal of the following pages, written, as you know, by an old navy revolutionary officer; you have consented that he should dedicate them to you. This is a proof of your attachment to the principles on which our Independence was founded. The active part which you took in the revolutionary war, on the side of the Americans, and your unabated zeal for Republican principles ever since that period, enables you to distinguish its true friends. In consequence of this, you have thought the present work interesting to the rising generation in the United States, and have recommended its publication. Wishing you every happiness this world can afford;

I remain
with sentiments of esteem
your very obedient, and
most humble servant
THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE

THE author of the following pages, at the time they were first written, never intended that they should appear before the public eye. But through the earnest solicitation of a number of friends, who having read his Journal, from which the following sheets have been compiled; he has been induced (together with a view of opposing the zeal with which certain characters in this country have strove lately to debase the American name, by branding it with the epithet of "coward," "poltroon," *not so brave as an Englishman*, and the like; which has often sounded in the ears of the author) to change his intentions, and to commit the whole to the press. He pledges himself, that he has in the compilation, kept truth on his side. That the perusal will meet with the entire approbation of every one is not to be expected; but it is hoped that the reader will forbear censuring the author too much, as he does not pretend to be a scholar (in regard of style or orthography), never having had but barely a common education; having followed the seas for a livelihood from his early youth upwards to the present time. However, the manner of writing, or the style, may suit the reader, as coming from the pen of an experienced sailor; he flatters himself that the public will condescend to give it a kind and favourable reception. In the meantime, he has the honour to be

The public's most obt. servant,

THE AUTHOR.

NARRATIVE, &c.

HAVING been born 1755, in the state of Connecticut, and in the early part of the American Revolution for independence, I imbibed the idea that the struggles between Great Britain and her American Colonies would eventually prove to the advantage of the latter. In full belief of the same, I took an active and decided part in favor of my country.

After having made two successful cruises against the English, I embarked on a third at Boston, on the 26th day of May, 1778, on board the brig *Angelica*, William Dennis, commander, a new vessel, mounting sixteen carriage guns, and carrying ninety-eight men and boys, on a six months' cruise against the enemies of my country. We sailed from Boston on the same day on which I embarked (it may be well perhaps to observe that I was only a prize-master on board said privateer). We saw nothing but a privateer belonging to Salem, which we spoke, till the 31st of May* at noon, when we discovered a sail bearing S.S.E. of us, the wind then being about N. by E. Orders were immediately given by the captain to make sail for her; in a short time after we could perceive with our glasses that she was a ship standing by the wind to the eastward; at 1 P.M. saw that she was a long frigate-built ship. All hands were now ordered to quarters and prepare for action; at 4 P.M. we were near enough to distinguish the chase from a Jamaica merchantman, which we at first view supposed it to be. In consequence of our being convinced that she was an English ship of war, we jibed ship and hauled on a

* My birthday.

wind to the westward, but too late, as the ship immediately hove in stays, run out her guns, and gave us chase in her turn, and in about three-quarters of an hour more she came alongside of us, and obliged us to haul down our Yankee colours, and proved to be the *Andromeda* frigate of twenty-eight guns, five days from Philadelphia, and had on board as a passenger the celebrated General Howe, of Bunker Hill memory, and was bound to Portsmouth, in England. The enemy soon obliged us to abandon the poor *Angelica*, and conducted us on board the *Andromeda*, where we were all paraded on the quarterdeck in presence of their great and mighty general, who asked us a number of insignificant questions; among which was, 'If we were willing to engage in his Majesty's service?'. We having answered pretty unanimously in the negative, he then upbraided us with these words: 'You are a set of rebels, and it is more than probable that you will all be hanged on our arrival at Portsmouth.' The master at arms was then ordered on the ship's quarterdeck, who soon made his appearance, and under the pretence of searching our baggage for concealed knives; he, with some of his comrades, very dexterously conveyed our said baggage out of sight, so that we saw nothing of it, or any part thereof afterwards. This was the more astonishing, as it was done under the general's eye; who ordered us all to be confined in the ship's hold. We soon began our march for this young *hell upon the seas*, and on our way we were ordered by some of the Jack tars to halt; who began to strip us, saying, or rather accosting us with these words: 'd—n my eyes, shipmate, but you have got a d——d fine coat there—fine hat —fine shoe buckles—fine jacket—fine breeches, etc.' but taking care to lard these expressions with an oath. In short everything that we then had was fine to them; and after saying, 'Come, come! shipmates, these fine things will only be a plague to you, as the climate is very hot where you are bound,' (meaning the ship's hold;)

they then without any further ceremony fell to work and stripped us of our clothes. There happened at this juncture to pass by a midshipman, who said, 'That is right lads, strip the d——d rebels, and give each of them a frock and trousers, those will be good enough for them to be hanged in!' We were, according to his orders, stripped, and after being furnished with frocks and trousers, we continued our march till we were shoved headlong into the aforesaid *hell upon the seas!* Two sentinels were then placed at the mouth thereof to prevent our running away! Here they kept us fasting during twenty hours, and then sent us our small pittance of provisions, which was no more per man per day than two-thirds of the allowance of a prisoner of war: however, it was in vain we petitioned for redress to the captain of the ship, and to General Howe; they were deaf to our complaints, and answered that we were treated with too much lenity, being considered as rebels, whose crimes were of such an aggravated kind that we should be shewn no mercy. The enemy at about nine at night set the *Angelica* on fire, and she soon after blew up, and the ship continued on her course for England.

The next day after being confined in the frigate's hold, a plan was set on foot by our surgeon to make ourselves masters of her; this met with the approbation of all, to appearance; and we agreed to put it in execution on the third of June, at half-past eleven a night, or to die in the attempt. However, in the meantime the surgeon had frequent conversations with the forecastle men and sentinels, who agreed all as one to join us. We had by this time pretty severely felt the effects of the heat in our confinement in the ship's lower hold upon the haul-up deck (a temporary one laying over the water punchions, ballast, &c.) as we were obliged from the excessive heat to go stark naked, only when we had occasion to go upon deck, which we were allowed to do only one at a time,

and once in twenty-four hours. I have often, while confined in this young hell, being almost suffocated, crawled into the wings of the ship, and got my nose to the air holes before I could fetch breath. In fine, we all suffered so much here we were willing to be all cut to pieces in our intended attempt, rather than suffer in this dismal place any longer. The most of the ship's crew at this time were so much affected with the scurvy, that we had no reason to expect any great opposition to obstruct us in our intended design; as we had some arms, cutlasses, &c., secretly conveyed down to us by persons who were in league with our surgeon.

Our plans being now ripe for execution, and the surgeon having been upon deck the two preceding nights, by consent of those who kept sentinel over us, they being in the plot; he had observed that the greater part of the watch were almost all the time fast asleep; so that it was very probable that we should not have met with a very warm reception. But an unforeseen casualty entirely frustrated our plan. About nine at night, on the third of June, when we were all prepared and in high spirits; having as we thought arrived almost to the height of our wishes, as we saw nothing then to hinder our taking possession of the frigate. One Spencer, Captain Dennis' clerk,* stole upon deck and made known to the general our plot; presently after the marines and sailors were all armed, and so great was the panic among both officers and crew that they were almost ready to believe that we were masters of their ship. However, the lower hatches were immediately thrown on and barred down; and now it was that we began to think seriously that we should very soon die in a heap, as the heat became intolerable; and to complete our sufferings, orders were given by this great and mighty general, to give us only as much provisions as would serve to keep

*A precisely similar instance of treachery only six months later, may be found in the "Narrative of Israel R. Potter;" Providence, 1824.
This was aboard the British frigate *Tartar*, in December, 1776.

us alive and to deal out to us no more water than half a pint per man per day; this was British humanity to a witness! However, as we were lodged upon the water casks, over which was laid a temporary deck, we, with a kind of proof-glass got a sufficiency; but as to provisions it was next to none. However, as there was nothing but a partition of plank between us and the general's store-room, we fell upon an expedient to augment our *stores;* as we had frequently beheld the captain's steward and general's servants from between the shifting boards abaft the pump-well, drawing off wines and other liquors, and only securing the bungs of each cask with their fingers; getting white biscuit out of one keg; neats' tongues out of another; raisins out of another; hams out of a cask they were stowed in; mess beef out of tierces; and in fine, this *store-room* contained almost everything agreeable to the taste, and in great plenty, On the evening of the 5th of June, at 10 at night, one Howard, a native of Rhode Island, a bold and enterprising fellow, declared he would not that night close his eyes until he drank some Madeira wine; and that he would be the person who would run the hazard of losing his life in order to serve us all, if we could make a breach, so that he could get into the said store-room. Accordingly we went to work, and soon found that one of the shifting boards abaft the pump-well was loose, and that we could ship and unship it as we pleased: when it was unshipped there was just room enough for a man to crawl into the store-room already mentioned, which Howard no sooner saw than he improved the precious occasion, and in he went; and presently after desired one to hand him a mug or can, with our proof-glass; a few minutes after he handed me back the same full, saying at the same time, "my friends, as good Madeira wine as ever was drank at the table of an Emperor." I took it from his hands, and being very dry, I drank about one-third of it, which was I judge about half a pint, and then gave it to my fellow sufferers.

The can thus went round merrily till we were all but Howard, what may be called decently drunk; and Howard, after having secured us some eatables of several kinds, and likewise putting the shifting boards in their place, retired to the general rendezvous upon the haul-up deck.* * * * Thus we lived like hearty fellows, taking care every night to secure provisions, dried fruit, and wines, for the day following, until the frigate came to anchor in Portsmouth, and that in pretty large quantities, without being beholden to our enemies' bounty, and without their knowledge. However, that they might not suspect this conduct of ours, we used to snatch at the small pittance of provisions allowed us when they dealt it out to us as if we were half starved, and at the water they allowed us the same. On our way to England the frigate lost part of her crew with the scurvy; but as for us, the general, as well as the captain and his officers, were astonished on the score of our being all brave and hearty. The former even expressed himself in this manner: 'What, are none of them d——d Yankees sick!' Somebody made answer, not one. 'D—n them' (says he), 'there is nothing but thunder and lightning will kill them.' This was reported to us by the captain's steward, and one of the general's servants.

At length on the last day of June, 1778, we arrived at Portsmouth, when the quarter-masters were ordered down into the cable tiers to see them clear, in order for letting go the anchors. But I had forgot to mention one circumstance relating to the sailors of the brig *Angelica* confined in the frigate's hold; it was this; they got, during our confinement, as much old Jamaica spirits as they wished to drink, by boring a hole through the bulkhead upon the larboard side of the pump-well, into a large butt which stood against the partition, and by means of quills drew spirits whenever they wanted.

But to return to the quarter-masters. As soon as they came

into the hold, upon the haul-up deck, they began to accost us in this manner: 'Well, shipmates, how have you fared the passage?' said one of them: 'D—n my eyes, Bob, but these Yankees look d——d well; I guess they found their way into the general's store-room—what say you, Bob?'

'I don't know Jack, but d——n me, if I don't wish the devil had run a-hunting with them all, before they had popped themselves in our way; for blast my eyes, but they have deprived us of many a good drink of Madeira, as well as old Jamaica *stingo*. Well, Bob, I think the poor devils (as the general says) will soon die with the *narrows*, as the Irishman's father did: —so d——d *narrow* that he could not get his head out!'

The ship came to anchor about 4 P.M. and early the next morning we were all ordered to make our appearance upon the quarterdeck; thus paraded, the captain told us to get ready to go on board of a better ship; 'That is she,' at the same time pointing to the *Princess Amelia*, 'on board of which you are to be hanged, without my gracious sovereign is pleased to pardon some of you, which I do not think will be the case, as your offences are of the blackest kind.' After this short harangue we were shoved headlong into the ship's boats, which lay waiting alongside for our reception, and conducted to a place called Hazel* hospital. On our way thither they rowed us under the gallows of 'Jack the Painter,'† which stood upon a point of land; and then the officer who had the command of the boats ordered his men to lay upon their oars, and told us we should fare the same fate as him who you see hung in irons yonder; at the same time pointing to the gallows on which he hung. This object

* Haslar.—[Ed.]

† James Aitken, described in a broadside of the day as 'James Hill, *alias* John the Painter' set fire to one of the Portsmouth dockyard buildings, December 6, 1776. He was executed March 10, 1777. In a confession which he was alleged to have made, he said that Silas Deane, then in Paris, gave him money to aid his attempt; (which would probably have succeeded had he not been betrayed by a confidant).

of British triumph appeared to be dressed in black with his hat upon his head, and silver shoe-buckles in his shoes. His crime was, setting fire to the Navy dock-yards in Portsmouth, which destroyed a great quantity of materials intended for the use of the British Navy, &c. On our arrival at Hazel hospital we were interrogated one at a time by the commissioners of the admiralty; some of whom although young-looking men had hair nearly as white as snow. Some of the questions which they asked were these: 'Where was you from, and where bound when captured? what force? by whom taken? who commissioned your privateer?' It is to be observed that these commissioners treated us with no abusive language; no imperious or domineering threats; on the contrary, they assured us we should be kindly used as prisoners of war; that as it appeared to them that we had been robbed of our wearing apparel, we should be furnished in a few days with each a decent suit at the King's expense, (which however, was not done.) After we had got through with our examination, we were marched to Forton prison* and there committed 'for piracy and high treason.' This prison lies about two miles from Portsmouth harbour and was built for an hospital in the reign of Queen Ann, for the accommodation of sick and wounded seamen. It is in two large spacious buildings, separate from each by a yard large enough to parade a guard of an hundred men, which number the officers and soldiers consisted of while I remained there a prisoner. The buildings thus separated, the northermost was occupied by the under officers, sailors and marines; and the southermost by the officers of somewhat higher grades. It is a very convenient place for prisoners of war, as there is a spacious lot adjoining the prisons containing about three-quarters of an acre of level ground, in the centre of which stands a large shed or building, open on all sides to admit the free circulation of air; under which were

* In Gosport, near Portsmouth.

seats for our accommodation when the weather was hot and sultry. The large yard, to prevent the prisoners from escaping, was picketed in on all sides; these were planted in the ground about two inches asunder, and about eight feet long. It would be very easy for the Americans to make their escape from hence even in the daytime, were it not for the peasants, who were always lurking about here, followed by their great dogs, and armed with great clubs. The reader will observe, this was the fact with regard to the American prisoners; and upon the report of one of us having made his escape, I could see sometimes seventy or eighty in a few minutes in search of their booty, beating the bushes, running to and fro, from ditch to ditch, till they had got fast hold of the poor Yankee, who was thus led in triumph to the old crab; (a nick-name given to the agent for American prisoners of war, who resided near the prison.) He was very old and ugly, and used to creep over the ground not unlike a large crab. He was also very boisterous and ill-natured towards all of us, and in the sequel the reader will perceive, that to this was added cruelty and revenge. These peasants or country people, had five pounds sterling for taking up an American who attempted to make his escape; but they obtained only half a guinea for securing a French prisoner.* The first two months of my imprisonment here, I received from the hands of the Rev. Mr. Wren, every Monday morning, two shillings and six pence sterling per week, during which time I made out to live pretty comfortable, but when this source was gone, and no longer existed, which was soon after the fact, I lived truly very miserable, not having any more provisions and small beer during the twenty-four hours than would serve for one meal: this allowance was dealt out to each prisoner, being but three-quarters of what was allowed to common prisoners of war; this however our good friends, the English, even

* The French prisoners of war were confined in a prison hard by ours.

thought too much for rebels: I say our small pittance of provisions was dealt out to us every day at twelve o'clock; mine I used to destroy, or rather devour it at one meal, and not have enough to satisfy the cravings of hunger.

Now it was that I felt the disagreeable feelings of going part of the time half starved; and have often picked up bones in the yard and begged others without the walls of the prison, of people who lived near thereto; with these, by digging out the inside of them with a sharp pointed knife, I have partly satisfied the severe craving of an hungry appetite, which have often tasted to me more delicious than anything I have ever tasted since my liberation from this dismal confinement. Great numbers of the country people made it a custom to come and see us every day; but more particularly on Sundays; sometimes they would amount to a thousand and upwards: and on some of those days, many of which would make use of the following expressions, at the same time observing us very attentively: 'Why, Lard, neighbour, there be white paple; they taulk jest as us do, by my troth; thare's a paity such good looking paple shou'd be troused up by our grate men, &c. (Troused =hanged.)

One day the following inhuman action took place here; an officer who mounted guard over us with his men, to the number of about an hundred, and who it seems were determined before they were relieved, to be the death of some of the rebels, as they expressed themselves to this effect to one of the turnkeys, who afterwards told it to one of us. Accordingly, to make some pretence, the officer, who I think was a captain, went into the guard-house and got a red hot poker, with which he fell to burning the American prisoners' shirts, which they had hung upon the pickets to dry. It may be well here to observe, that the owners of these shirts had not a second to their backs; so that they begged the officer in a very

civil manner, not to be so cruel as to burn all the shirts which they had; he would not however listen to their entreaties, but kept on his villainy. The American prisoners seeing this, ran to the pickets, and snatched away their shirts (but without making use of any abusive language), which so enraged this son of old Beelzebub, that he ordered the sentinel to fire his musket in among us, who instantly obeyed, and killed one man dead, and wounded several; at this time there were not less than three hundred Americans in the yard. This done, he ordered the guard to parade and fix their bayonets; they then rushed among us and drove us into prison and had the doors locked and barred, to prevent a revolt of the prisoners. The next day a jury was summoned, who met at the old *crab's* dwelling-house, and after some deliberations, gave in their verdict *manslaughter;* although it was proved by more than twenty witnesses, who were inhabitants of Gosport, that the sentinel who committed this murder, after having discharged his piece, loaded it in an instant, and threatened to fire upon us again if we did not shut our mouths; thus ended (to the shame and confusion of the British character) this tragical event. Soon after this, Mr. Hartley,* then a member of the British parliament, a very plain man, and who was said to be a great friend to the Americans, came to see us, talked familiarly with us, and gave us encouragement of our being exchanged soon: this was about the middle of November, 1778; but we put so little confidence in what he told us, that we imagined he only did it to amuse us, having so often heard such kind of stories from people who came to visit us. The hardships we had already experienced, and the thoughts of remaining in close confinement, perhaps for years, wrought so powerfully upon us, that we came to the determination of (the only way in our power)

* This was David Hartley, afterwards one of the British Commissioners who met Franklin and other Americans in Paris and arranged the terms of peace.

digging out. Accordingly, as we were shut into the prisons from sunset to sunrise, we occupied ourselves in the night, when all around was quiet, in undermining the prison walls, in order to effect our escape, which proved effectual to great numbers: however, many who attempted this mode of escape, especially such as had not money enough to bear their expenses as far as London, a distance of about seventy-five miles, were taken and brought back to their old confinement; but were obliged to suffer the extra punishment of lying in the *black hole** forty days and forty nights: (as long as Satan was suffered to tempt our *Saviour.*) In this place the American prisoners were allowed nothing but bread and water to subsist upon; many nevertheless, succeeded in making their escape even from this place by digging out, and crossing the channel to France, in small boats called *wherrys.* Those who had continued in the black hole till the expiration of the forty days, were allowed the liberty of the yard as before; being first entered upon the Agent's books as deserters, and not to be exchanged till the very last. This was a great mortification to many, as will be seen in the end; for some of them, in consequence of their desertion, remained here prisoners of war three or four years thereafter: in fact, a few of them were not released from prison until the peace.

It will not, perhaps, be here amiss to mention what was done with so much dirt and stones, taken out of the great number of holes dug by the prisoners; which I will inform the reader, so far as has any relation to those under the prison where the officers were confined, and where I was. The dirt was partly lodged in an old stack of chimneys nearly in the centre of our prison; the fire-places below having been for years before stopped up, and we were lodged upon the second and third floors. The chimney aforesaid being white-washed, we used when our work was finished for the night,

*A kind of dungeon.

to paste a piece of white paper over the hole where we emptied the dirt into the hollow of the chimney. The dirt, &c., was put into small canvas bags, by those who were employed in digging under ground, and from thence passed from one to the other until it was at the place of deposit, where it was emptied, and then passed back to be filled again, where the diggers were at work. This kind of work began generally about 11 o'clock at night, when all was still excepting the sentinel, who would from time to time cry, 'All's well,' and last till about 3 o'clock in the morning; at which time the hole in the chimney was closed as before related, and all of us would retire to rest. After a while the chimney was filled with dirt and stones; however, we soon found another place to deposit what we took out of the holes: this was in the garret of the prison, underneath the floor. It was lathed and plastered, through which we made a hole large enough for a man to get through into the garret, here we put several cartloads of dirt and stones, and the hole was secured in the same manner as the one before mentioned in the chimney.

In the prison where the American officers were confined was a number of French officers, who had been taken in the American service, two of whom were tolerable scholars, and amused themselves in teaching the Americans the French language.

I had myself acquired a considerable smattering of it before I left the prison; so much so, that I could converse with the French gentlemen who were our fellow prisoners. In the other prison, where the subaltern officers, seamen and other Americans were confined, there were regular schools kept, in which the masters taught reading, writing, arithmetic, and navigation. Numbers of the Americans,* who, when they were captured by the English and shut up in Forton prison, did not know how to *read*, and many others

* Many of these have since been advanced to the rank of masters of vessels: otherwise had they never seen Forton prison, they never would have been more than sailors.

who could not write, so that in fact it was a most fortunate circumstance in the whole course of their lives: (I mean that of their being taken and committed to this place.) The attention and application which most of them paid to their studies, was really commendable. The officers in the prison where I was confined, amounted at one time to about three hundred and sixty-seven, out of which number there were about one hundred and thirty-eight who made their escape, and got over to France, in the course of twelve months; all these crept through the holes dug, as before mentioned. In the night, while a certain number were busily employed in digging and in passing the bags of dirt and gravel to the place of deposit; others were employed in dancing (after the sound of the violin, as we had among us several fiddlers). The room where we used to exercise in this manner was large and spacious, with a fireplace in the centre of it. Upon the second floor, and directly over the English officers' guard-room, so much noise was made sometimes, that the guard would be turned out, the turnkeys called up to open the prison doors, and the guard would then rush into the prison, and find all the lights put out, every man in his hammock, the bags, &c., secured and all quiet, when after threatening of us in the most abusive language, that if we made any more noise we should all be thrust into the black hole, they would retire as wise as they came. We, however, as soon as all was hush, once more would turn out and repeat our common exercise. Several times in the course of a single night the guard would repeat their visits in the way I have related, and would always find us in our hammocks.

The hall in which we slept, was upon the second floor (next room adjoining the dancing or keeping room) about two hundred feet long, and about forty in breadth; upon each side of this spacious hall was arranged our hammocks; hooks were affixed in the

sides of the hall and in two rows of posts, about eight feet from the sides, to which our hammocks were suspended in the night; but during the day, they were hung up to the walls on each side; this made room in great plenty for walking and other kinds of exercise. The hammocks, to each of which was added a king's rug (cover laid) a straw bed and pillow of the same kind, furnished each prisoner, at the King's expense; these had generally been before used in hospitals, and on board of prison-ships, and were full of *nits* and *lice* so that in fact we might have been called a lousy set of fellows; and the first thing to be seen every morning as soon as it was light, were naked men sitting upon their breach, in their hammocks, lousing themselves. Could we have obtained only the eighth part of a farthing for every louse so killed, from the government, and the money punctually paid us every day, we should have left prison as rich as Jews! One circumstance which occurred during my confinement here ought not to be forgotten; several of the prisoners were taken suddenly sick and removed to the hospitals; some of these died with strong symptoms of having been poisoned. This created a general alarm among the prisoners; some of whom believed the same game was playing here, as had been done on board the old *Jersey*, a prison ship near the city of New York; there held by the British, and on board of which ship, we had heard that thousands of our countrymen had died.* Various conjectures were agitated from whence the cause of this sudden and mortal disease had originated; and after a succession of trials, assisted by several physicians and surgeons who were among us, the poison was traced, and found in our bread; by dissolving which, we found quantities of glass pounded fine. Will any one who is ever so great a stickler for the British King and government and who has been acquainted

* The number of Americans who died on board of that ship during the American Revolution (as published) exceeded eleven thousand.

with this circumstance, have the arrogance to say anything more about *British humanity?*

A regular complaint was now lodged by the Americans to the proper authority, and some enquiry made; some laid the blame to the agent, he to the baker, the baker to them who furnished him with materials, with which he made his bread; and here this atrocious and murderous transaction ended. However, it is hoped by the compiler of these sheets, that this, as well as the conduct of the British relative to the old *Jersey*, will be had in eternal remembrance by the citizens of the United States, so long as the British shall exist as a nation!!! The humane and kind treatment of one person towards the American prisoners, however, ought to be universally known in the United States. I mean an English clergyman, by the name of *Wren*.* This good man, at the time, lived in Gosport, not far from Forton prison. His house was an asylum for the Americans who made their escape from confinement; and every one of these, if they could once reach his abode was sure to find a hiding place, a change of wearing apparel and money, if they were in want of it, and a safe conveyance to London, where they would consider themselves in perfect safety; as they could at any time go from thence to France, by the way of Dover and Ostend†. And in order to more fully illustrate the character of this Rev. gentleman, the reader is informed, that before the declaration of independence by the American Congress, large sums of money were subscribed by

* Through the kindness of Rev. R. S. Medlicott, Vicar of St. Thomas à Becket's Church, Portsmouth, and Mr. Alfred T. Everitt, also of Portsmouth, I am able to identify this good man as Rev. Thomas Wren, minister at the Unitarian Chapel, High Street, Portsmouth, from 1757 to 1787.

In recognition of his humanity to the American prisoners, our Senate at the close of the war passed a vote of thanks, accompanied by the offer of a sum of money. This he positively refused, and then they procured for him the degree of Doctor of Divinity, from the College of New Jersey (now Princeton).

Through the kindness of Mr. Everitt, we are able to give his portrait, copied from a miniature owned in Portsmouth. We believe it has never before been copied.—[Ed.]

† Then a neutral port, 33 miles from Dunkirk, in France.

individuals in England for the benefit of the American prisoners, who were then confined in different parts of that country. The subscription, at one time, amounted to eight or ten thousand pounds sterling; towards which it is said, the queen gave one thousand guineas out of her private purse. This source soon dryed up; for no sooner had the declaration of independence arrived in England than the subscription before spoken of ceased altogether. A committee of the subscribers chosen for that purpose had appointed a person at, or near each prison, where the Americans were confined, whose duty it was to distribute the money among the prisoners, according as they should deem to be right and just. Mr. Wren was the one appointed near us; and I believe he exercised the trust reposed in him, with punctuality. He made it a part of his duty to visit us once a week during my continuance here, and was in the habit of calling us, 'my children.' Besides, when the subscription fund was entirely gone, he used to go round the neighbourhood, and even where he was not known, to beg clothes and money for us. Often have I experienced this good man's bounty. Frequently some bad characters among the Americans, would accost him with abusive and insulting language, if he did not supply all their wants: his only reply would be, "have a little patience, my children, and I will endeavour to bring you the next time I come, whatever you are most in need of."

At length my deliverance from captivity drew near: an exchange of American prisoners was in contemplation; and the Rev. Mr. Wren assured us it would take place in a few days; and as this desired event approached the days and nights seemed to grow longer, and the time more irksome. In short, in the contemplation of which my heart leaped for joy, and my spirits raised above the power of description.

The long looked for day at last arrived; a day which I shall

NOTE.—The photograph of Dr. Wren's portrait not arriving in time, we shall have to furnish the reproduction separately to our subscribers, as soon as it shall have been received.

never forget: it was on the 2d of June, 1779, in the afternoon, when the agent's clerk came into the yard and informed us, that one hundred and twenty of us were to go on board a cartel the next morning, in order to be sent to France. He then called over the names of that number, and I found myself included, being the hundred and eighteenth upon the list. And after he had read to us, with an audible voice, his majesty's most gracious pardon, he told us that we must hold ourselves in readiness to go on board of the cartel, then lying at the Key, on the west side of Portsmouth. Never I believe was joy equal to what I now experienced. Accordingly, the next morning about eight o'clock, we who had been called over the day preceding, were again called upon to answer to our names, and were paraded in the yard: the rest of the American prisoners, amounting to about four hundred and eighty in both prisons were not permitted to mix with us, and not suffered to come out of their confinement till we began our march, which commenced about 10 o'clock, in company, or rather escorted by about forty British soldiers and a number of black drummers and musicians, who beat up the tune of Yankee Doodle, which they continued playing, till we arrived at the place of embarkation. We left behind several poor fellows, who had been prisoners three years and upwards; and as for myself, I had been one only about thirteen months; therefore, it is easier I think, for anybody to judge than to pretend to describe the mortification of those who had been so long in confinement, on seeing us thus about to taste the sweets of liberty! Methinks some of them would be led to exclaim, O Liberty! O my country! On our march through the town of Gosport, the streets became crowded with people; some wishing us safe to our desired homes; others crying out, that we were a set of rebels, and that if we had had our deserts we should have been hanged: these exclamations were repeated with loud

huzzas. On this occasion, I observed that the women were most boisterous; we soon got out of their hearing, and embarked on board the cartel, and hauled off into Portsmouth roads. On the 6th of June we set sail for Nantz in France, and on the 10th following, we came to anchor off Van Boeuf,* a small town situate upon what is sometimes called the Nantz† river, on the West side, and about thirty miles N. W. of that city. Here we disembarked, and as soon as we began to enter the town, great multitudes of the French came to welcome us; even the children appeared to rejoice at our landing; and to demonstrate this, they all joined by singing as they followed us along: 'Bon, bon, bon, cettez Boston rompez auce anglais aux des cannon.' The substance of which in English is: 'Here are the good Bostonians‡ who beat the English with their great guns.' When we got into the centre of this town, we were met by an American, who was clerk to the American agent at Nantz, who informed us that by the direction of the agent, he had provided lodgings for us, and immediately accompanied us to the hotel De Orleans. It was now nearly 12 o'clock in the daytime; soon after dinner was served up, which consisted of a great variety of dishes; to every cover or plate, was laid a clean napkin, a tumbler, spoon and a silver fork, with four prongs, and the servant girl announced to us that dinner was ready. After we had taken our seats at the table, one of the gentlemen observed, that there were no knives at table, and desired me, as I was the only person in the company that pretended to speak French, to call for some knives. I accordingly bid the girl bring us *des gateace:* 'we, monsieur,' says she, and went out: presently after, she returned with several small molasses cakes which they called gateau. This mistake of mine in pronunciation caused abundance of mirth among my

* Paimboeuf.—[Ed.]
† The Loire.—[Ed.]
‡ At this time all the Americans in France were called Bostonians.

countrymen. I endeavoured all in my power to make the girl understand me, but to no purpose, until I shewed her a penknife; which, on seeing, she replied instantly, 'Oh monsieur, ce des couteaux que vous vouliez.' 'O sir, it is knives that you want!' went out of the room, and soon after returned with the number of knives wanted. I mention this to shew my reader now difficult it is for a person who has been taught French among the English, to make themselves understood by the former, when among them, which was the case with me; for it is a fact, that before I left Forton prison, I could converse with the French gentlemen confined there, upon almost any subject, and was by them perfectly well understood; the reverse was the case with me in France. This very transaction discouraged me for a long time thereafter, from ever attempting to speak the French tongue.

On the 12th, we embarked for Nantz, where we arrived in the afternoon of the same day. Nantz is a pretty large city, situate upon the east side of the river Loire, in the province of Bretagne (Britany) and about fourteen leagues from the entrance of said river, near the sea; the houses are very high, being mostly four or five stories, built with hewn stone, which attaches to them an elegant appearance, especially at any moderate distance from the city. The greater part of the streets are very narrow and dirty, notwithstanding they are well paved. The Exchange, where the merchants assemble every day between the hours of 12 and 2, to consult upon mercantile affairs, is a very level piece of ground, containing about two acres, where it is surrounded with trees of a middling stature, which meet together in their uppermost branches and make a most delightful shade. I tarried in this city until the 23d, when a purse of money was made up by the French gentlemen, for the Americans who had lately arrived from Forton prison, which amounted, if my memory serves me correctly, to 215 guineas; be-

sides, they furnished us who were in want, which was the case with nearly all of us, with decent wearing apparel, and were exceedingly kind and humane towards us in other respects. Thus having been furnished with cash, &c., I set off by land for L'Orient, where I arrived the 27th.

The town lies about one hundred miles W. S. W. of Paris: it is a King's port and the harbour is an excellent one for ships of the line, as well as other vessels, but difficult to enter, by reason of a great number of sunken rocks at the entrance, which a very strong citadel commands, called Fort Louis, and which ships, in coming in are obliged to approach within musket shot. The town is not very large, and the dwelling houses are not so high nor so elegant as those I had seen at Nantz, but the streets are pretty regular and well paved, and there is here an excellent dockyard and a long row of buildings which are founded upon the Key and make a fine appearance as one approaches the town from the sea. Here the French had been accustomed to deposit great quantities of goods brought from the Indies; but within these ten years the East India Company, belonging to or trading from this port, have been bankrupts. They had been in a like situation some considerable time ago; the English, in the last war between the French and them, captured all the ships belonging to this company but one or two; since which time they have never been able to recover their losses altogether, and their long and beautiful range of stores are now occupied by the King or his agents; since which misfortune the town has not been in so flourishing a condition as it was formerly. However, since the Americans have had a free trade here and a good vent for their tobacco, it is very probable that in a few years this town will recover its former splendour by growing very rich. I here met with the celebrated John Paul Jones, who invited me to go on

board of his ship called *Bon Homme Richard** then lying in the harbour; as he said he was bound immediately for America and that I might go home in her if I chose, in the capacity of a midshipman. I went on board accordingly, but found by discoursing with some of the officers who belonged to her, that she was bound on a short cruise in the English Channel, before she would sail for America. I therefore, as there was no other opportunity of procuring a safe passage home in any other vessel, agreed to go with Captain Jones the cruise; and on the 14th day of August, 1779, set sail from L'Orient.

The squadron of which Jones was the commodore, consisted of the following warlike vessels: vis. The *Bon Homme Richard*, of 40 guns, mounting 6 eighteen pounders upon her lower gun deck, 28 twelves and nines upon her middle gun deck, and 6 six pounders upon her spar and quarterdecks. Her crew, including officers, men and volunteers, consisting of four hundred and fifteen (boys also included in that number). The *Alliance* frigate, of 36 guns, twelves, nines, and sixes, and two hundred and ninety officers, men, and boys. The *Monsieur* frigate, of 22 guns; the frigate *Palais* of 28 guns; the brig *Vengeance*, of 16 guns; and the *Cerf* cutter, of ten guns.† The commodore, thus lifted above his common sphere, or element, assumed the title of 'Commander in Chief of all the American Ships of war, in Europe.' Before we lost sight of the land, he sent a written message by the *Vengeance*, signed John Paul Jones, commander in chief, &c., as above. This was addressed to Cap-

* The Good Man Richard.

† I do not know the number of men on board of either of these four last mentioned vessels. In the 1826 edition, Fanning says: "a merchantman called *Le Pallas*, of thirty-two eight pounders, and a brig named *Le Vengeance*, of twelve three pounders; but neither of them calculated for war, being very crank, and their timbers in many places decayed; to these was added *Le Cerf*, a very fine cutter belonging to the royal navy, carrying eighteen nine pounders; with the *Alliance*, a new frigate belonging to the U. S. * * * *

In Sherburne's life of Jones, he says the *Pallas* was commanded by Captain Denis Nicholas Cottineau de Kloguene, the *Cerf* by Captain Joseph Varage, and the *Vengeance* by Captain Philip Ricot.—[Ed.]

tain Babcock, commander of an American privateer, a ship mounting 16 guns, then lying at anchor in the mouth of the river Loire, purporting that Captain B. must immediately weigh anchor, get his ship under weigh, and join the squadron under his command, or abide the consequences resulting from disobedience of orders!!! The *Vengeance* executed this order, and in a few hours returned and reported that the *General Mifflin* had sailed. On the 16th at night, took a large English ship laden with bales of silk, and other valuable articles, and manned her for France. The same night, Jones had a violent dispute with the captain of the *Monsieur* frigate, and I apprehended that some bad consequences would have been the result, as all hands were ordered to quarters to engage the *Monsieur;* the captain of which thought it prudent for him to make sail from us, which he did, and was soon out of the reach of our guns: we gave chase to her, but could not gain on her; this so much exasperated Jones, that he struck several of his officers with his speaking trumpet over their heads, and ordered one of his lieutenants under confinement; that is, to go down to his state-room and there remain till released by his orders: by this time, the *Monsieur* had got out of sight, and we saw her no more during the remainder of our cruise. Jones by this, had got quite calm, and sent his servant to invite the lieutenant in confinement, to come and sup with him, who obeyed the summons, and even after went to his duty as before. This lieutenant was raised to this station by Captain Jones, and of course aided in that capacity only during the pleasure of the latter; which was in fact, the situation of his three lieutenants and sailing master, neither of which had a commission or warrant from the proper officer in the United States; and therefore were liable always, when Jones saw cause, to turn them *afore the mast.* It may be well here just to mention, that Jones's former lieutenants, appointed by Congress, and regularly commissioned, had had some dispute with

him; in consequence of which they had quit him, carrying away their commissions with them, at the same time. This occurrence took place in Brest, when Captain Jones commanded the *Ranger*, of 18 guns, a United States ship of war; the first lieutenant of which commanded her after Captain Jones left her, as I have been informed.

On the 17th, saw the highlands of Dungarvan, upon the coast of Ireland, and a large ship to windward, standing in for the land to reconnoitre the coast. At 4 P.M. the signal was made for the *Alliance* to make sail and see what it was, which was partly executed. The *Alliance* had got nearly within cannon shot, and then bore away to speak us, which she soon after did; and the captain of the *Alliance* told Captain Jones that the ship to windward was an English line-of-battle ship; for, said he, I did go near enough to see her upper battery; to this Jones made but a short reply, calling him a coward. From this time, a most inveterate hatred existed between these two captains, during the remainder of our cruise; and which would break out at times, when there was the greatest need of their being united by the most friendly ties; as the nature of the service, and the honour of the American flag absolutely demanded it. The signal was now made for the whole squadron to chase the sail to windward, but night coming on, she was soon out of sight. We afterwards were informed by a fish boat that came alongside, that the ship we had been chasing was an English East-Indiaman. At 8 P.M. we had been set in shore by the current, in such a manner that we were close aboard of the rocks, and as it was nearly calm, several boats were got ahead of our ship, in order to tow her off from the breakers, which was done. At 11 o'clock at night, the barge, which was the head-most boat, with eleven men, and one of our Lieutenants in her, cut from the rest, and rowed with all their might for the shore. The sailing-master was immediately ordered

into the cutter, another of the boats belonging to our ship, with twelve armed men, to pursue these fugitives; and were, after they landed, close to the heels of the runaways, when they were all taken prisoners by the Irish: in this manner we lost two good experienced officers, and twenty-two of our best seamen. At 12 at night, there sprang up very suddenly, a terrible gale of wind from the N.E. which lasted about twenty hours; during which, we lost sight of the rest of the squadron, and in the height of the gale, one of our lower deck guns got loose, and came very near being the means of sinking our ship before we could secure it; and even without this incident, if the gale had continued as violent as the latter part of it was, four hours longer, we must inevitably have gone to the bottom; for our ship leaked so bad, that we could not with four pumps constantly at work, keep her free the latter part of the gale; which by the by, was no great wonderment, as she was a ship that had been in the King's service upwards of sixty years; and then was called a ship of the line, as having mounted 64 guns; at the end of which time she was condemned in Brest, as not being *seaworthy*. The East India Company at L'Orient now purchased her, and fitted her for the Indies, where she made two voyages, at the expiration of which she was again condemned as unfit for service in that trade, and laid up as a hulk in the Bason at L'Orient, among a number of old condemned ships belonging to the King of France. And in fact, at the time, and during the last gale, she almost wrung to pieces, and appeared to have as many joints in her back-bone as a rattlesnake. This was the ship in which Jones often said, he was able to capture an English sixty-four, provided he had fair play for it. The weather at last proved favourable, and we shaped our course for the Lewis's Islands, which lie north of Scotland; as this was the place appointed for the next rendezvous of our little squadron; in sight of which we arrived on the 20th of August. The

day following, we captured 11 sail of vessels, one of which being valuable, we put a prize-master and seven men on board, and ordered her for L'Orient in France; the rest we sunk, all being English vessels bound from Ireland to Norway.* On the 22d, saw a large-looking ship in shore of us, to which we gave chase, soon after we discovered three more sail in the northwest quarter; found we gained upon the chase, and soon came alongside of her. She proved to be an English letter of marque, mounting 22 guns, a ship in the service of the British government, last from Leith, and bound for Quebec. She was laden with cables, cordage, and military stores, for the use of the British forces in Canada. She made no resistance, not even firing a gun (for the honour of the British flag) but dowsed her colours as soon as she was commanded to do it. At Meridian the other three sail which we had discovered in the morning joined us, which were the *Alliance* with her prize (an English ship of war mounting 24 guns, laden with the same kind of articles as the one we had captured but a few hours before, and consort to her;) and the *Pallais*, also about the same time joined us; and the next morning early we fell in with the brig *Vengeance;* but she could not tell what had become of the *Cerf* cutter, the other tender. The squadron now stood in for the Orkney Islands after having manned the two prizes and sent them for a port in France. We cruised off these islands several days, during which we took, burnt, and destroyed, sixteen sail of vessels. We then shaped our course for the N.E. part of Scotland, where we arrived soon after, and took seven large colliers† and burnt them. After this we steered towards Edinburgh castle, off which we lay off and on for several days. On the 10th of September Commodore Jones had a dispute with one of his lieutenants, and ordered him

* In (and to) the Kingdom of Denmark.

† Ships in the coal trade.

below under confinement to his cabin, and as he was descending the ladder kicked him on the breach several times; in half an hour afterwards sent his servant to invite him (the lieutenant) to come and dine with him; the lieutenant obeyed and went. Thus it was with Jones, passionate to the highest degree one minute, and the next ready to make a reconciliation. Towards night a signal was made for all the captains and lieutenants belonging to the squadron to assemble on board the Commodore's ship; and when they were convened the Commodore consulted with them relative to a plan which he said he had had in contemplation some time previous thereto; and that he had no doubt in his own mind, provided his officers would unanimously assist him, of succeeding in it. The plan was this; for the whole squadron to move up the river of Leith, wearing English colours, and his officers to wear the English navy uniform, which he had already provided; and in passing Edinburgh castle* in this manner, no suspicion would be entertained by the garrison of our being the enemy. In thus proceeding up said river, the probability was, that we might arrive before the city of Leith and come to anchor, get springs on our cables, and present our formidable broadsides to the citizens, who no doubt would be unprepared to make any resistance, the city being large and rich, being at some distance up a river, and not having any considerable fortifications to protect it from an invading foe, Edinburgh castle being a few miles from it, and which completely commanded the entrance of said river. Further, Jones's plan was, that as soon as the squadron was safe at anchor before the city, and ready for cannonading it, an officer was to have been sent to the city, bearing a flag of truce, whose demand was to be, that the citizens of Leith should pay one hundred thousand pounds sterling in half an hour. This sum was to be collected and transported on board the commodore's

* The strongest fortress in Great Britain.

ship, at the expense and risk of the said citizens *instantaneously.* Should they find it difficult to obtain so large a sum in so short a time, they were allowed to make up the deficiency in *silver plate;* but in case the terms on the part of the citizens, were not complied with, at the expiration of half an hour, the town was to be set on fire by the squadron with red hot shot, as they were prepared with them; after which we were to retreat or run away by the light of the flames as fast as possible. This plan, as might have been expected, at first met with some opposition, from a majority of Jones's officers, as it appeared to them to be a very rash and hazardous undertaking. For, admitting we could get up the river to Leith, without any difficulty or opposition; yet they said, that the garrison at the castle of Edinburgh, which we would be obliged to pass and repass, might have warning in twenty minutes from Leith; where, provided we succeeded, we should be prevented from going off with our booty. And as this fortress commanded the entrance of the river, and being always well supplied with men and guns, the lower tier consisting of 20 forty-eight pounders, and the upper part of as many twenty-four pounders; and as we should have to pass within point-blank shot of so many guns, they could not conceive how there could be even a probability of getting off clear. At length, after many pros and cons, Jones displayed so artfully his arguments in favor of his plan that it was agreed pretty unanimously to put it in immediate execution. Accordingly, all the officers belonging to the squadron were supplied with English navy uniforms, each according to his rank; and when they were thus apparelled the squadron made a stretch in near the castle, the wind then being favourable to run up the river, hove to within gun shot of the same, and made a signal for a pilot, who soon came on board the commodore's ship; the other vessels likewise being each supplied with one, put us in a fair way to proceed up to Leith, but the

tide then not serving, we were obliged to lie by a little longer. In the meantime, the English commanding officer at Leith, supposing us to be an English squadron, sent a boat on board the American Commodore's ship, requesting to know the name of him who commanded the squadron, (accompanied with the English officer's compliments;) the names of the ships, and whether he wanted any assistance of provisions and the like; and if he intended coming up to Leith with his squadron, and if that was not his intention, (he, the governor, had sent by the bearer, an English officer,) a request for a barrel or two of powder, as they had next to none in the fort at said place; further adding, that he understood there were then several American privateers cruising upon the coast, and which had taken several sail of English vessels and that the governor of Leith was fearful that they might come up the river in the night, and make some attempts to destroy the town; which he said might particularly at that time be easily effected, as the greater part of the citizens at that place were under great consternation and alarm, believing such an event quite probable. This message from the governor, particularly the request for *powder*, pleased Jones wonderful well. He therefore sent by the officer, his compliments to the governor, *fictitious names* for his ships and the commanders, corresponding with the names of ships in the British navy, of the size and number of guns as those of his squadron, the captains whereof had already English names assigned them, and by which they were then called.

The British officer having gone away for Leith with a barrel of *powder*, and compliments, as I before observed, and we were only waiting for the turn of the tide, when the following incidents frustrated the whole of Jones's scheme of plundering the city of Leith, ('and like the baseless fabric of a vision,') all his vast projects of wealth and aggrandizement, became at once a shadow that passeth

away, never more to appear again!!! Just before the tide was to have served, the wind shifted suddenly from the N.E. where it had been blowing some time, into the S.W. which blew down the river very fresh; and about the same time a prize brig, which was then in company with us, and which we had captured while we lay at the mouth of the river, partly manned by Englishmen, ran on shore apparently on purpose, and the whole crew disembarked and ran for their lives, as fast as their legs would carry them. As soon as this was discovered, several boats armed, were dispatched from the squadron to overtake the runaways and bring them back, but to no purpose; for the men belonging to the brig had entirely effected their escape; and as it was apprehended that these deserters would endeavor to reach the castle as soon as possible, with an intention of informing who we were, no time was therefore to be lost; the signal was given for the boats which had been sent in pursuit of the deserters, to abandon the prize brig, which they were attempting to get off, and to return on board the squadron: this being done, the commodore ordered the signal to be made for making sail upon our little fleet, and standing out to sea. This was done without receiving a single shot from Edinburgh castle, although the whole squadron had been for several hours within gun shot of it. On the 11th, took two prizes; put prize masters and men on board of them, and ordered them for Dunkirk, in France.

We now shaped our course for Scarborough, a seaport town in Yorkshire, and situated on the German Ocean, and soon arrived off this port. We cruised here several days, without meeting anything but small English coasters, and pilot boats: the latter sloops, rigged and decked, burthen about fifteen tons. One of these we converted into a small tender; she served us for a decoy, and likewise for to land in, when we had occasion for fresh water and fresh provisions, &c. On the 22d day of September, 1779, at 4 P.M.

we discovered a fleet in the S.E. quarter, standing for Scarborough. At 5 P.M. we could plainly discover that this fleet were convoyed by two sloops of war (English) the largest of which taking us to be an enemy, made the signal for the fleet to disperse and save themselves. The two sloops of war then made sail from us, as did also the merchantmen; although they had by this time got pretty near us. Our commodore also made the signal for our little squadron to chase the enemy's fleet by crowding all the sail we could set, soon after the *Alliance* brought two of them to, who struck their colours.

We had just put the 2d Lieutenant of our ship on board of the small tender, with about twenty men well armed, in order to take possession of these merchant vessels that were the nearest to us, when a fleet was discovered in the Eastern board; the weather clearing off a little about the same time, we could count thirty-seven sail of vessels in that quarter, all apparently standing in for the land. As soon as Jones had taken a peep or two at them with his spyglass, he expressed himself to his officers, then standing by him upon the quarterdeck, in this manner: 'that is the very fleet which I have been so long cruising for.' He immediately ordered a signal to be made for the squadron to abandon the small fleet, which we were then almost in the possession of, consisting of thirteen sail of vessels, some of which was said to be very valuable. Another signal was made for the squadron to crowd all sail after the fleet in the Eastern board, and without waiting for the tender, on board of which was one of his best officers, and twenty of our best men; he appeared to be impatient, till all the sail we could set on board of our ship, the wind then being between the south and west, was spread; and now came on a general chase for the enemy. At half-past 6 o'clock P.M. we were near enough to distinguish two of this fleet to be ships of war; one of them had the appearance of a

frigate, and the other a sloop of war. These two ships perceiving that we were enemies, and that by our manoeuvering our intentions were to attack them, hove in stays, and stood off the land with a view, as afterwards appeared, of engaging us: while the merchant ships kept hovering in with the land, but could not make a harbour as there was none nearer than Scarborough. At 7 P.M. made a signal to speak the *Alliance* and *Pallais;* in a quarter of an hour thereafter, spoke the *Alliance*, when Capt. Jones, ordered the capt. of her to engage the largest of the two ships of war, in conjunction with the *Good Man Richard;* and that as soon as he had fired his broadsides, if a favourable opportunity then presented, to board her; and for that purpose to have his men in readiness. He answered, that the Commodore should be obeyed; this was succeeded by three cheers from the officers and crew of the *Alliance.* Also, ordered the capt. of the *Pallais* to engage the smallest ship of the enemy, who was now pretty near us; we then had a breeze from the S.S.W. of perhaps six knots. They soon after hove to, and hauled up their courses, and showed St. George's colours.* Our little squadron, drawn up in order of battle, shewed them the thirteen stripes, colours which we fought under. Soon after the largest of the enemies' ships made a signal in consequence of which her consort, in the twinkling of an eye, set all the sail she could, and endeavoured to make her escape by running to the leeward. The *Pallais*, agreeable to orders, made sail after her. The *Alliance* too, disobeying orders, quit her station and ran to the leeward, making all the sail she could crowd; so that we were now left alone; the *Vengeance* being then astern, and never come into the action, to contend with a ship far superior to ours, as will be seen hereafter.

The command of the main top having been given to me some

*A white field or flag with a red cross on it, and the union in the head.

time before,* I was ordered down on the quarterdeck, as was the captains of the fore and mizzentops; both midshipmen, and very young, neither of them exceeding seventeen years of age, when we received our orders from Capt. Jones, in person; and which was in substance, that at first and until the enemies' tops were silenced, to direct the fire from our tops into the enemies' tops, of the musketry, blunderbusses, cowhorns,† and swivels; always taking care to fire into the enemies' top nearest the one we occupied in our own ship; in order, he said, that we might, after silencing the enemies' tops‡ have the fairer opportunity of clearing their decks. The captains of the tops, having received their orders, how to proceed during the action, within a few minutes of commencing, mounted to their stations, and drew up into the tops a double allowance of grog for their men. By this time we were near our antagonist, when she hauled down St. George's colours, and hoisted the red flag, with the union on the upper corner of it, which the captain with his own hands nailed to the flagstaff: this was told us by some of his officers after the battle; and which fact the captain did not deny, after he was made a prisoner.

Before I proceed to give the reader a relation of the action, it may be well to state the force of the two ships, with the number of men, &c., with the arrangements made on board of our ship before the battle. I have however, in a few pages back given a particular account of the *Bon Homme Richard's* force; but notwithstanding, the reader, I hope, will not be displeased, when he will here see at one view the correct force, &c., of each ship, which will enable him,

* In Sherburne's *Life*, the commander of the maintop is said to have been Lieutenant Edward Stack, an Irish officer of Walsh's regiment in the French Service. He afterwards rose much higher in the French navy, where he seems to have had much service, probably as a member of the Marine Corps.

† Cohorns or Coehorn, a small mortar.—[Ed.]

‡ It appeared after the action, that the captain of the English man of war had given orders to his top men to direct their fire down upon our quarter-deck, as he knew who commanded our ship.

let him be of what country he may, to form a tolerable judgment, which had the advantage in this long and bloody battle; the Americans or the English. Besides, the *Good Man Richard* had since she sailed from L'Orient, lost some of her officers and men by desertion, others by manning prizes, and one lieutenant and about twenty men, who were on board the small tender, and did not come alongside the *Bon Homme Richard*, till after the action was over.

I begin first with the *Good Man Richard* of 40 guns; viz.

6 eighteen pounders upon her lower gun-deck;
14 twelve do do do middle do
14 nine do do do do do
2 six do do do quarter do
2 do do do do spar or upper do, viz.
1 in each gangway; and lastly,
2 six pounders upon the forecastle.

N.B. Several men out of the vessels which we had captured, having entered on board of our ship, and others of the same class who would not enter, but chose to fight, which they did, like brave fellows; these last, however, did not exceed seven or eight, so that the whole number of officers, men and boys, on board of the *Good Man Richard*, at the commencement of the action, did not exceed 380, men and boys. The greater part of these were Americans, I think to the number of 300. The rest were English, French, Scotch, Irish, Portuguese and Maltese, in fact, a perfect medley of different nations.

The *Serapis*, commanded by Captain Parsons,* our antagonist, was rated a 44, but had mounted at the beginning of the battle, 50 guns: viz.

* Richard Pearson.

20 eighteen pounders upon her lower gun-deck.
20 nine do do do upper do
6 six do do do quarter do
4 do do do do forecastle; carrying in all 305 men, including the officers, and about 15 Lascars (East-Indians).

Disposition made on board of our ship before the battle begun . . . There were stationed.

In the main-top, myself, fifteen marines, and four sailors, 20.

In the fore-top, one midshipman, ten marines, and three sailors, 14.

In the mizzen-top, one midshipman, six marines, and two sailors, 9.

On the poop, a French colonel,* a volunteer, with twenty marines (French).

On the quarterdeck, the commodore, a lieutenant-colonel (Irish volunteer), three midshipmen, as aid-de-camps to the commodore, the purser, and a number of sailors and marines.

The sailing-master was occasionally on the quarterdeck, the ship's gangways, forecastle and poop.

One of the master's mates had charge of the six eighteen pounders upon the lower gun-deck, where there were also stationed ten men to each of these guns.

The first lieutenant, Richard Dale, was stationed upon the second or middle gun-deck, with the gunner and the other master's mate; these two last acted as lieutenants as occasion required, as we had at this time but one lieutenant on board, as the reader will recollect. The first lieutenant had a sufficient number of men stationed with him for managing the guns, &c.

The boatswain's station was upon the forecastle, and he had the command of the guns mounted there, and also the forecastle men.

*The French Colonel is named in Sherburne's *Life* as Colonel de Chamillard.

The carpenter had no particular part of the ship assigned to him, but he was merely told to do his duty.

The rest of the petty officers and crew were placed in different parts of the ship.

I shall now proceed to give a circumstantial account of this famous BATTLE, fought on the night of the 22d day of September, 1779, between the GOOD MAN RICHARD, an American ship of war commanded by John Paul Jones; and the SERAPIS, an English ship of war, commanded by Captain Parsons, off Flamborough Head, upon the German Ocean.

To proceed then with the thread of my journal, from where the two ships were nearly within hail of each other, when Captain Jones ordered the yards slung with chains, and our courses hauled up. By this time the *Serapis* had tacked ship, and bore down to engage us; and at quarter past 8, just as the moon was rising with majestic appearance, the weather being clear, the surface of the great deep perfectly smooth, even as in a mill pond, the enemy hailed thus: 'What ship is that?' (in true *bombastic English stile*, it being hoarse and hardly intelligible). The answer from our ship was, 'Come a little nearer, and I will tell you.' The next question was, by the enemy, in a contemptuous manner, 'What are you laden with?' The answer returned was, if my recollection does not deceive me, 'Round, grape, and double-headed shot.' And instantly, the *Serapis* poured her range of upper and quarterdeck guns into us; as she did not shew her lower-deck guns till about ten minutes after the action commenced. The reason of this, I could not learn but suppose they intended to have taken us without the aid of their lower-deck guns. We returned the enemies' fire, and thus the battle began. At this first fire, three of our starboard lower-deck guns* burst, and killed

*Ten men were stationed to each of these guns.

the most of the men stationed at them. As soon as Captain Jones heard of this circumstance, he gave orders not to fire the other three eighteen pounders mounted upon that deck; but that the men stationed to them, should abandon them. Soon after this we perceived the enemy, by their lanthorns, busy in running out their guns between decks, which convinced us the *Serapis* was a two decker, and more than our match. She had by this time got under our stern, which we could not prevent. And now she raked us with whole broadsides, and showers of musketry. Several of her eighteen pound shot having gone through and through our ship, on board of which, she made a dreadful havoc among our crew. The wind was now very light, and our ship not under proper command, and the *Serapis* out-sailing us by *two feet to one;* which advantage the enemy discovered, and improved it, by keeping under our stern, and raking us fore and aft; till, at length the poor French colonel, who was stationed upon the poop, finding almost all his men slain, quit that station with his surviving men, and retired upon the quarterdeck. All this time our tops kept up an incessant and well-directed fire into the enemies' tops which did great execution. The *Serapis* continued to take a position, either under our stern, or athwart our bow; gauled us in such a manner that our men fell in all parts of the ship by *scores.* At this juncture, it became necessary on the part of our commander, to give some orders to extricate us from this scene of bloody carnage; for, had it lasted one-half an hour longer, in all human probability the enemy would have slain nearly all our officers and men; consequently we should have been compelled to strike our colours and yield to superior force. Accordingly, Captain Jones ordered the sailing master, *a true blooded Yankee,* whose name was Stacy,* to lay the enemies' ship on board; and as the *Serapis* soon after passed across our fore foot, our helm was put hard

*Samuel Stacey.—[Ed.]

a-weather, the main and mizzen topsails, then braced aback, were filled away, a fresh flaw of wind swelling them at that instant which shot our ship quick ahead, and she ran her jib boom between the enemies' starboard mizzen shrouds and mizzen vang. Jones at the same time cried out, 'Well done, my brave lads, we have got her now; throw on board the grappling-irons, and stand by for boarding:' which was done, and the enemy soon cut away the chains, which were affixed to the grappling-irons; more were thrown on board, and often repeated. And as we now hauled the enemies' ship snug alongside of ours, with the tailings to our grappling-irons; her jib-stay was cut away aloft and fell upon our ship's poop, where Jones was at the time, and where he assisted Mr. Stacy in making fast the end of the enemies' jib-stay to our mizzen-mast. The former here checked the latter for swearing, by saying, 'Mr. Stacy, it is no time for swearing now, you may by the next moment be in eternity; but let us do our duty.' A strong current was now setting in towards Scarborough, the wind ceased to blow, and the sea became as smooth as glass. By this time, the enemy finding that they could not easily extricate themselves from us let go one of their anchors, expecting that if they could cut us adrift, the current would set us away out of their reach, at least for some time. The action had now lasted about forty minutes, and the fire from our tops having been kept up without intermission, with musketry, blunderbusses, cowhorns, swivels, and pistols, directed into their tops, that these last at this time, became silent, except one man in her foretop, who would once in a while peep out from behind the head of the enemies' foremast and fire into our tops. As soon as I perceived this fellow, I ordered the marines in the main-top to reserve their next fire, and the moment they got sight of him to level their pieces at him and fire; which they did, and we soon saw this skulking tar, or marine, fall out of the top upon the enemies' fore-

castle. Our ensign-staff was shot away, and both that and the thirteen stripes fell into the sea in the beginning of the action. This ought to have been mentioned before, but I had so many other circumstances to relate of more importance, and the succession of them was so quick, one close upon the heels of another, that I hope the reader will take this for an excuse. Both ships now lying head and stern, and so near together that our heaviest cannon amidships, as well as those of the enemy, could not be of any use, as they could neither be spunged nor loaded. In this situation, the enemy, to prevent (as they told us afterwards) our boarding them, leaped on board* of our ship, and some of them had actually got upon the fore part of our quarterdeck; several were there killed, and the rest driven back on board of their own ship, whither some of our men followed them, and were most of them killed. Several other attempts to board were made by both parties in quick succession, in consequence of which many were slain upon the two ships' gangways, on both sides. We were now something more than a league E. by S. from a point of land called Flamborough Head, and in about ten or twelve fathoms of water (and the reader may rest assured, as the *Serapis's* anchor was at the bottom, and her crew not having any leisure time to weigh it), we remained here until the battle was at an end. At this time the enemy's fleet was discernible by moonlight in shore of us, but could not perceive any of our squadron except the brig *Vengeance*, and the small tender, which lay about half a league astern of us, neither of whom dared to come to our assistance. It had now got to be about forty-eight minutes since the action began, as near as I can judge, for we had no time to keep glasses running, or to look at our watches. The enemy's tops being entirely silenced, the men in ours had nothing to do but to direct their whole fire down upon the enemy's decks and fore-

* Both ships now lay so near each other, that one could step from one ship to the other.

castle; this we did, and with so much success that in about twenty-five minutes more we had cleared her decks* so that not a man on board the *Serapis* was to be seen. However, they still kept up a constant fire, with four of their foremost bow guns on the starboard side; viz, two eighteen pounders upon the lower gun-deck, and two nine pounders upon her upper gun-deck; these last were mounted upon her forecastle, under cover from our fire from our tops; her cannon upon the larboard side, upon the quarterdeck and forecastle, from the position of both ships, were rendered altogether useless; her four guns which she could manage, annoyed us very much, and did our ship considerable damage. About this time the enemy's light sails, which were filled onto the *Serapis's* cranes over her quarterdeck sails caught fire; this communicated itself to her rigging and from thence to ours; thus were both ships on fire at one and the same time; therefore the firing on both sides ceased till it was extinguished by the contending parties, after which the action was renewed again. By this time, the topmen in our tops had taken possession of the enemy's tops, which was done by reason of the *Serapis's* yards being locked together with ours, that we could with ease go from our maintop into the enemy's foretop, and so on from our foretop into the *Serapis's* maintop. Having knowledge of this, we transported from our own into the enemy's tops, stink pots, flasks, hand grenadoes, &c., which we threw in among the enemy whenever they made their appearance. The battle had now continued about three hours, and as we, in fact, had possession of the *Serapis's* top, which commanded her quarterdeck, upper gun-deck and forecastle, we were well assured that the enemy could not hold out much longer, and were momently expecting that they would strike to us, when the following farcical piece was acted on board our ship:

* Quarter and main deck guns is here meant.

It seems that a report was at this time, circulated among our crew between decks, and was credited among them, that Captain Jones and all his principal officers were slain; the gunners were now the commanders of our ship; that the ship had four or five feet of water in her hold;* and that she was then sinking: they therefore advised the gunner to go upon deck, together with the carpenter, and master at arms, and beg of the enemy quarters, in order, as they said, to save their lives. These three men being thus delegated, mounted the quarterdeck, and bawled out as loud as they could, 'Quarters, quarters,† for God's sake, quarters! our ship is a-sinkin'!' and immediately got upon the ship's poop with a view of hauling down our colours. Hearing this in the top, I told my men that the enemy had struck and was crying out for quarters, for I actually thought that the voices of these men sounded as if on board of the enemy; but in this I was soon undeceived. The three poltroons, finding the ensign, and ensign-staff gone, they proceeded upon the quarterdeck, and were in the act of hauling down our pendant, still bawling for 'quarters!' when I heard our commodore say, in a loud voice, 'what d——d rascals are them—shoot them—kill them!' He was upon the forecastle when these fellows first made their appearance upon the quarterdeck where he had just discharged his pistols at some of the enemy. The carpenter, and the master-at-arms, hearing Jones's voice, skulked below, and the gunner was attempting to do the same, when Jones threw both of his pistols at his head, one of which struck him in the head, fractured his skull, and knocked him down, at the foot of the gangway ladder, where he lay till the battle was over.‡ Both ships now took fire again; and on board of our ship it communicated to, and set our main top on fire, which threw us into the greatest consternation

* This was told the gunner by the carpenter, who certainly had a right to know.
† As quarter is meant it is strange Fanning uses the plural throughout the story.
‡ His scull was trepanned and he afterwards got well.

imaginable for some time, and it was not without some exertions and difficulty that it was overcome The water which we had in a tub, in the fore part on the top, was expended without extinguishing the fire. We next had recourse to our clothes, by pulling off our coats and jackets, and then throwing them upon the fire, and stamping upon them, which in a short time, smothered it. Both crews were also now, as before, busily employed in stopping the progress of the flames, and the firing on both sides ceased. The enemy now demanded of us if we had struck, as they had heard the three poltroons halloo for quarters. 'If you have,' said they, 'why don't you haul down your pendant;' as they saw our ensign was gone. 'Ay, ay,' said Jones, 'we'll do that when we can fight no longer, but we shall see yours come down the first; for you must know, that Yankees do not haul down their colours till they are fairly beaten.' The combat now recommenced again with more fury if possible than before, on the part of both, and continued for a few minutes, when the cry of fire was again heard on board of both ships. The firing ceased, and both crews were once more employed in extinguishing it, which was soon effected, when the battle was renewed again with redoubled vigour, with what cannon we could manage: hand grenadoes, stink pots, &c., but principally, towards the closing scene, with lances and boarding pikes. With these the combatants killed each other through the ship's port holes, which were pretty large; and the guns that had been run out at them becoming useless, as before observed, had been removed out of the way. At three quarters past 11 P.M. the *Alliance* frigate hove in sight, approached within pistol shot of our stern, and began a heavy and well-directed fire into us, as well as the enemy, which made some of our officers as well as men believe that she was an English man of war. (The moon at this time, as though ashamed to behold this bloody scene any longer, retired behind a dark cloud). It was in vain that some

of our officers hailed her, and desired them not to fire any more; it was in vain they were told that they were firing into the wrong ship; it was in vain that they were told that they had slain a number of our men; it was in vain also that they were told that the enemy was fairly beaten, and that she must strike her colours in a few minutes. The *Alliance*, I say, notwithstanding all this, kept a position either ahead of us or under our stern, and made a great deal of havoc and confusion on board of our ship; and she did not cease firing entirely, till the signal of recognisance was displayed in full view on board of our ship; which was three lighted lanthorns ranged in a horizontal line about fifteen feet high, upon the fore, main and mizzen shrouds, upon the larboard side. This was done in order to undeceive the *Alliance*, and which had the desired effect, and the firing from her ceased. And at thirty-five minutes past 12 at night, a single hand grenado having been thrown by one of our men out of the main top of the enemy, designing it to go among the enemy, who were huddled together between her gun decks; it on its way struck on one side of the combings of her upper hatchway,* and rebounding from that, it took a direction and fell between their decks, where it communicated to a quantity of loose powder scattered about the enemy's cannon; and the hand grenado bursting at the same time, made a dreadful explosion, and blew up about twenty of the enemy. This closed the scene, and the enemy now in their turn (notwithstanding the gasconading of Capt. Parsons) bawled out 'Quarters, quarters, quarters, for God's sake!' It was, however, some time before the enemy's colours were struck. The captain of the *Serapis* gave repeated orders for one of his crew to ascend the quarterdeck and haul down the English flag, but no one would stir to do it. They told the captain they were afraid of our rifle-men; believing that

* The hatchways are generally taken off during an action; for this reason, that if anything thrown on board, such as a hand grenado and the like, happens to fall in through the hatchway, it descends down upon the haul-up-deck, where if it bursts it will injure nobody.

all our men who were seen with muskets, were of that description. The captain of the *Serapis* therefore ascended the quarterdeck, and hauled down the very flag which he had nailed to the flagstaff a little before the commencement of the battle; and which flag he had at that time, in the presence of his principal officers, swore he never would strike to that infamous pirate J. P. Jones. The enemy's flag being struck, Captain Jones ordered Richard Dale, his first lieutenant, to select out of our crew a number of men, and take possession of the prize, which was immediately put in execution. Several of our men (I believe three) were killed by the English on board of the *Serapis* after she had struck to us, for which they afterwards apologized, by saying, that the men who were guilty of this breach of honour, did not know at the time, that their own ship had struck her colours. Thus ended this ever memorable battle, after a continuance of a few minutes more than *four hours*. The officers, headed by the captain of the *Serapis*, now came on board of our ship; the latter (Captain Parsons) enquired for Captain Jones, to whom he was introduced by Mr. Mase,* our purser. They met, and the former accosted the latter, in presenting his sword, in this manner: 'It is with the greatest reluctance that I am now obliged to resign you this, for it is painful to me, more particularly at this time, when compelled to deliver up my sword to a man, who may be said to fight *with a halter around his neck!*' Jones, after receiving his sword, made this reply: 'Sir, you have fought like a hero, and I make no doubt but your sovereign will reward you in a most ample manner for it.' Captain Parsons then asked Jones what countrymen his crew principally consisted of; the latter said, 'Americans.' 'Very well,' said the former, 'it has been *diamond cut diamond* with us.' Captain Parsons' officers had, previous to coming on board of our ship, delivered their sidearms to Lieutenant Dale. Captain

* This was Matthew Mease of Philadelphia. Other accounts credit him to Massachusetts, or give him the French Christian name of Mathurin. Another account says he was wounded.

Parsons in his conversation with Captain Jones, owned that the Americans were equally as brave as the English. The two captains now withdrew into the cabin, and there drank a glass or two of wine together. Both ships were now separated from each other, and were mere wrecks; the *Serapis's* three masts having nothing to support them,* fell overboard with all the sails, tops, yards, rigging, &c., belonging to them, making a hideous noise in the water; they had been shot off by our guns in the early part of the action. The main-mast about one foot above the ship's gangway and quarterdeck; the foremast just below the fore top, and the mizzen mast about ten feet above her quarterdeck. Several eighteen pound shot had gone through our main-mast, and most of the shrouds belonging to it were cut away, so that nothing kept it standing but the stoppers, put on them by the quarter-masters, where the shrouds had been shot away. We that were stationed on the main top found it, during a part of the action, a very ticklish situation, from which we were ordered down upon the quarterdeck as soon as the English had struck.

We were now much alarmed on board of our ship in consequence of having two more enemies to encounter with, almost as formidable as those we had but just conquered, viz. fire and water. Our pumps† had been kept going without any intermission for about two hours, and still the water in the ship's hold increased fast. The ship had received several shot in her bottom so low, or so far under water, that it was impossible to find means to stop them up, so that it was reduced to a certainty that she must sink in a short time. The fire had communicated itself to several parts of our ship (made up with rotten wood, pitch, tar and oakum); this being the case, the more water thrown on the fire, the more furiously it

* They were kept standing during the greater part of the action by our yards and rigging being locked and entangled with theirs.

† Four of them.

would burn; in fact the effect was the same as throwing water upon and over a pot or kettle of pitch, tar or turpentine, when on fire. The fire had now penetrated to within the thickness of a pine board to the bulk head of the magazine of powder; it was therefore found to be impracticable to extinguish the fire, or to free the ship of water; for we well knew that one or two things must happen; either the ship would burn down to the water's edge and then sink, or she would sink first. In this dilemma Jones ordered the signal of distress to be hung out, which the *Alliance*, *Pallais* and *Vengeance* observing, sent their boats to our assistance. The powder was now ordered to be got out of our magazine, and that no man should quit the *Good Man Richard* till every cask of powder was safe on board of the boats then alongside. The English officers were much frightened at this, as was the case with many of us, as the fire was at that moment in and about the powder room, and we expected every moment to be blown into the air. The English officers therefore, assisted us in getting up the powder; and Captain Jones encouraged them by telling them that he would not abandon his own ship till every cask of powder was out of her. This piece of service being accomplished in a few minutes, after which Jones and the English officers embarked on board of the boats, and went on board of the *Serapis*, first leaving orders with his officers to abandon the *Good Man Richard* after we had got all the wounded men and English prisoners out of her and put them on board of the squadron.

One circumstance relative to the first lieutenant, by the name of Stanhope,* is so singular, that I am induced to relate the fact: it was this, early in the action he hung himself down by one of the *Serapis* stern ladders into the water, so that his body was immersed

* This man, who was said to be a lord's son, was for his bravery on board the *Serapis*, afterwards appointed to the command of an English frigate. This is proof among many others of a similar kind, that to be promoted by the English government does not always depend upon merit.

in water; in this situation he hung with only his head above water during the remainder of the action. It was noticed by one of our officers when Stanhope surrendered among his brother officers, and came on our quarterdeck, that he appeared to be entirely wet, and the question was put to him how his clothes came to be wet. He said he had just before the *Serapis* struck, attempted to sound her pump-well to see how much water she had in her, and fell into it. But the petty officers of the *Serapis* declared to us, that the fact was as above stated, and was also confirmed by several of the English sailors belonging to that ship.

The *Pallais* had captured the consort to the *Serapis*, an English ship of war mounting 22 guns,* and called the *Countess of Scarborough*, after a brisk action, which lasted about half an hour, which two ships now joined the squadron. The *Serapis* having been pierced with several shot during the action between wind and water was thought to be sinking; consequently, the assistance of the crews of the different ships composing the squadron was demanded on board of the *Serapis;* the chain pumps on board of her were kept constantly going, and the cranks attached to them were double manned, and were often relieved. Two chain pumps, the number the *Serapis* then had, if kept at work as fast as possible, are allowed to deliver about a ton of water in a minute; the reader may therefore, according to this computation, form some judgment how much water must have been pumped out of the *Serapis* in four hours, the time taken with the pumps constantly going for sucking her out. The carpenters at this time employed in stopping shot holes, &c.

But to return to the *Good Man Richard*, where we were busily employed in getting out the wounded, and embarking them on board of the boats belonging to the squadron, when the alarm was given, that the English prisoners, to the number of about fifty, and

*Another account says 20, six pounders.

who had been let out of confinement after the battle, had taken possession of our ship and were running her on shore; and they were at this time absolutely masters of the quarterdeck, spar-deck and forecastle, and had got the ship before the wind, and her yards squared by the braces, steering directly in for the land, the wind being about east. In consequence of this, another battle ensued, but we having in our possession the greater part of the arms suitable for a close fight, and although they out-numbered us, we soon overpowered them, and again became masters of the ship; not, however, until we had killed two of them, and wounded and drove overboard several others. These last, about thirteen in number, took possession of one of the boats laying alongside of our ship and made their escape to land. After this, the rest of these desperate Englishmen were ordered into the boats and transported on board the *Pallais*.

I now took a full view of the mangled carcasses of the slain on board of our ship; especially between decks, where the bloody scene was enough to appal the stoutest heart. To see the dead lying in heaps—to hear the groans of the wounded and dying—the entrails of the dead scattered promiscuously around, the blood (*American too*) *over one's shoes*, was enough to move pity from the most hardened and *callous breast*. And although my spirit was somewhat dampened at this shocking sight, yet when I came to reflect that we were *conquerors*, and over those who wished to bind America in chains of everlasting slavery; my spirits revived, and I thought perhaps that some faithful historian would at some future period enrol me among the heroes and deliverers of my country. Pardon me, gentle reader, for this involuntary digression, and let this be my excuse, that I felt the spirit which infused courage into my breast on the night of, and during the battle which I have just given you a faithful relation of, even while my pen was tracing the dreadful conflict.

The two prizes were king's ships, and before captured, they were convoying a fleet from the Baltic to Scarborough, in England, consisting of thirty odd sail, not one of which was taken by any one of our squadron, although they were in sight during the battle, and were to be seen by us the morning after near the land, and no orders were given, nor no attempts made by either of our squadron to take possession of any of them. The reason was, that the then wrecked situation of the *Serapis* was such that it required the utmost exertions of all who belonged to the squadron to save this valuable ship.*

However, it is certain that had the captain of the *Alliance* frigate obeyed the orders given to him before the commencement of the action by the commander in chief, which the reader no doubt remembers, the whole of the enemy's fleet must have fallen into our hands; this the English commander acknowledged after the fight. But after this long and hard fought battle was over, it was not thought advisable, for reasons before given, to dispatch either of the squadron to capture any of the English merchant ships.

Having now executed the orders left us by Captain Jones, we thought of leaving the *Good Man Richard* to the mercy of the winds and waves. The wind now blowing a fresh gale at N.E. I went down into the gun room with some others, to see the lieutenants and other officers' trunks taken out from thence, and put into the boats. But, good God! what havoc! not a piece of them could be found, as large as a continental dollar! 'Tis true we found several shirts, coats, &c., but so shockingly were they pierced with the enemy's shot, round and grape, that they were of no value. In fact such a large breach was made through and through our ship's quarter and gun room, that provided the ship could have been placed upon the

*She was a new ship only four months off the stocks, completely coppered and would if preserved make a valuable acquisition to the rising navy of America.

land in a position so as to have buried her in it to her lower gun deck, one might have drove in with a coach and six, at one side of this breach and out at the other. The splinters and pieces of our ship that were here, scattered about upon the deck were in heaps, and perhaps twenty carpenters at work upon wood and timber, would not have made as many in five days' constant labour. Upon the whole, I think this battle, and every circumstance attending it minutely considered, may be ranked with propriety, the most bloody, the hardest fought, and the greatest scene of carnage on both sides, ever fought between two ships of war of any nation under heaven.*

During the action, the enemy threw into our gun room upwards of one hundred eighteen pound cartridges, with a view, as they owned, of blowing our ship up. And even had this took place, the reader will not be mistaken I presume, in his conclusion, that both ships, their officers and crews must have all met the same fate. For if our ship had blown up, laying so near the enemy's, we must have all gone into eternity together, not a single doubt remains in my mind, but this would have been the inevitable result. The officers belonging to our ships, in this action lost all their wearing apparel except what they then stood in, with their trunks, hats, &c. For my own part, the coat I then had on my back was partly burnt when our main top caught fire; in consequence of which, together with the blackness of my face with powder, I had more the appearance of a *runaway negro* than that of an American officer. We that were now on board of the *Good Man Richard*, thought of nothing but of abandoning her, as she was to serve as a coffin for many of my brave countrymen, who had fought and died in the bed of honour, while

* One of the gunners of the *Bon Homme Richard's* crew, Jonathan Wells, of Amoskeag, N. H., was living in 1833, when he met Andrew Jackson in Boston; told him he reminded him of Jones, particularly as he and Jackson had each given the British "the d—dst licking they ever had." Jackson was greatly pleased with the old tar's compliment.—Brady's *True Andrew Jackson.*

they were fighting for our liberty. It was even painful for me to quit forever this ship, on board of which so much bravery had been displayed during this battle; but necessity and self-preservation required it to be done, and that promptly, as her lower hold was at this time nearly full of water. We accordingly embarked on board of the small tender,* and soon after reached the *Serapis*. There Captain Jones desired me not to get on board of her, but to remain where I then was, take three hands with me and return on board of the *Good Man Richard;* for said he, I have left in such a part of her cabin, naming the place, sundry valuable papers, and you must go back and get them, even at the risque of your life; but be sure not to make any tarry. After having received such positive orders, I knew it would be in vain to remonstrate, although I was quite sensible it was a kind of forlorn Don Quixote undertaking. I therefore made sail upon my little bark, and shaped my course, but doubting within myself what would be the result. The wind then blew a fresh gale, and there was at the time a pretty bad sea running. I say, I shaped my course for the poor old ship, which was then about a mile from the *Serapis;* and before I had got out of hail, I was by Captain Jones ordered not to run any risque. Arriving alongside of the *Good Man Richard*, under her guns, we found her lying nearly head to the wind, with her topsails aback, and the water running in and out at her lower deck ports: we shot along under her stern, where we were becalmed. I now ordered the oars to be got out, as I found by her motion, and by her being nearly under water, that she was on the point of sinking; this somewhat staggered me, and I ordered my men who were with me to pull at the oars with all their might. Finding our situation very dangerous, we got off about four rods from her, when she fetched a heavy pitch into a sea

* The same I heretofore have spoken of.

and a heavy roll, and disappeared instantaneously, being about two hours after we had taken possession of the *Serapis*. The suction occasioned by this, together with the agitation of the waters, was so great that it was perhaps a minute before we could be certain whether we were above or under the water, and in consequence of which we shipped several hogsheads of water, and if our little barque had not been decked we must have met the fate of the *Good Man Richard*.

We now attempted to get on board the *Serapis*, but the gale of wind that succeeded this sad catastrophe prevented us for some time thereafter. The weather became suddenly very thick, in consequence of which we lost sight of the *Serapis* and the rest of the squadron. The wind increased, and the seas run high, so that we were obliged to get a balance mainsail upon our little bark and heave her to; by this time she leaked so bad that it was not without the greatest difficulty that we could keep her above water. Thus we continued tossed and driven about for about thirty hours, part of that time at the mercy of the winds and waves, at the end of which the wind began to abate and the sea became more smooth. In the whole of this time, we had not on board one ounce of beef, pork, bread nor any kind of eatables whatever, and but one quart of fresh water. Soon after this we arrived alongside of the *Serapis*, with light hearts and hungry stomachs, where we were received with a hearty welcome and a great deal of joy, especially by the commodore, who had, it seemed, given us over for lost.

The weather soon after fell nearly calm, every officer and man on board the *Serapis* had full employ (excepting the sick and the wounded) in erecting jury masts, rigging them, &c. For this purpose we got from the *Alliance* three spare topmasts, and other spars. The former ship had several of the kind, but they were

pierced through with shotholes received from the *Good Man Richard* in several places, which rendered them unfit for this service.

After having called over the roll of that ship's officers and crew, by the direction of the commodore, it was reduced to a certainty that we had lost in the late battle, one hundred and sixty-five officers, men and boys killed, and one hundred and thirty-seven wounded* and missing.† Of the wounded, nearly one hundred of that number were thrown overboard from the vessels in the squadron, where they had been conveyed after the action. With regard to so many of the wounded having died, it was probably owing to the unskilfulness of the surgeons who amputated them. The fact was, we had but one surgeon in the squadron who really knew his duty, and that was doctor Brooks,‡ a Virginian; this man was

*The frequency with which negroes were enlisted in the navy—as well as army—at that time, appears from a letter written by General Knox to John Nicholson, the Controller of Pennsylvania, in 1790, when Knox was Secretary of War. This relates to the case of John Jordan, a negro "who lost his right leg in an engagement with the *Serapis*, a British ship of war."

†Several wounded men were carried on board the different vessels in the squadron, but these were all included in this account.

‡NAVY DEPARTMENT,
LIBRARY AND NAVY WAR RECORDS,
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Dear Sir:

The following is furnished you in reply to your request for some information regarding Dr. Brooks, surgeon of the *Bonhomme Richard*.

Laurence Brooke, sometimes spelled Brooks, was born about August 23, 1758, at Smithfield on the Rappahannock River, 4 miles from Fredericksburg, Va. His family was prominent in the early days of Virginia.

In 1774 he and his brother were sent to Edinburgh, Scotland, to complete their education; one as a lawyer, the other a doctor.

At the commencement of the War of the Revolution, Laurence Brooke had not graduated in medicine; but he escaped with his brother to France. He offered his services to Captain John Paul Jones as surgeon on the *Bonhomme Richard*, they were accepted, and it is stated that he received his appointment from Benjamin Franklin. The roll of the *Bonhomme Richard* shows him as entered at Paimboeuf, France, April 5, 1779. He was evidently a great favorite, an agreeable, cultured gentleman as well as a skillful surgeon. He is mentioned in correspondence with Jones, and letters of John Adams, and Fanning says of him that he was the only surgeon in the fleet who really knew his duty. Captain Pearson, in his report, mentions that his surgeons assisted Dr. Brooke in the care of the many American and British wounded after the fight between the *Bonhomme Richard* and the *Serapis*, and it is stated that these three surgeons messed with Captain Jones in the cabin.

After the removal of Jones, his officers and men from the *Serapis* to the *Alliance*, Dr. Brooke asked permission of Jones to leave the service, saying that he had only agreed to serve

as bloody as a butcher from the commencement of the battle until towards night of the day after. The greater part of the wounded had their legs or arms shot away, or the bones so badly fractured that they were obliged to suffer under the operation of amputation. Some of these poor fellows having once gone through this severe trial by the unskilled surgeons, were obliged to suffer another amputation in one, two, or three days thereafter by doctor Brooks; and they being put on board the different vessels composing the squadron, made it difficult for doctor Brooks to pay that attention to them which their cases required: besides, the gale of wind which succeeded the action, and which I have made mention of, made it altogether impracticable for him to visit the wounded, he being all this time on board the *Serapis*, excepting such of them as were on board of this ship. The gunner, at the close of the action, whom I before noticed, was found among the wounded, and who got well of his wound; but for the act of cowardice, which he had been guilty of, by begging for quarters of the enemy during the action, he was turned before the mast, and made to do duty as a common sailor, which was all the punishment he received for his crime.

on the *Bonhomme Richard*; his "health required attention impossible to be given on shipboard", and he further stated that he had determined "never more to serve as surgeon in the Navy unless compelled by the utmost necessity". Jones objected to his leaving, saying that he had not the power to give him the permission; both he and the surgeon had entered under the same agreement. Brooke insisted upon being allowed to leave immediately, December 4, 1779. This led to an estrangement with Jones. He does not appear to have left the *Alliance* immediately, for December 19, mutual friends refer to him as there and hope that he and Jones have settled their differences. Presumably he returned to France on the ship, which sailed from the Texel shortly after this controversy, December 27th. He did not return to the United States with his brother, who sailed in the *George Washington*, in 1780, but remained in France until 1783. In that year he commenced to practice medicine in Smithfield, Va., and continued it for nine years. He again visited Edinburgh, but was in Fredericksburg settling his father's estate in 1792. He died there in 1803.

Dr. Brooke's brother mentioned above, was Governor of Virginia 1794-1795 and Attorney-General of the state 1798 until his death, February, 1800.

Dr. Brooke married Miss Frances Thornton of Virginia. The Virginia Magazine of History for 1911 gives an interesting sketch of him and his family. Some of the above data is taken from it.

Very respectfully,

CHARLES W. STEWART,
Superintendent Library and Naval War Records.

The *Serapis* was not only dismasted in the fight, but her quarter rails, crane, nettings, and the like, were completely levelled with her quarterdeck; her bowsprit was nearly rendered useless by our shot; as was also her boats, and several of her cannon was in a similar situation having been dismounted. The slaughter, however, among the officers and men was not so great as on board of the *Good Man Richard.* By her muster roll, it appeared that the *Serapis* lost in the action one hundred and thirty-seven of her crew killed including officers, and about seventy-six wounded; in which number are included near twenty who were blown up at the closing scene of the action by a hand grenado and powder, not one of which recovered: they lingered along for two or three days, and they were burnt in such a shocking manner that the flesh of several of them dropped off from their bones. and they died in great pain.

During the foregoing battle, there were by computation fifteen hundred people upon the land on Flamborough Head and near it, who beheld this scene of human carnage and some of whom I have since seen said that the tops of the nearest ship to the land, which was the *Good Man Richard*, after the first of the action, appeared to the beholders as in a constant blaze of fire.

On the 26th of September, four days after the battle the *Serapis* was in a condition to have sail made upon her. Accordingly we crowded all the sail we could and steered for the coast of Holland, in company with the squadron. The next day an English 64, and three frigates, which had been dispatched by the British government to capture us, arrived upon the very spot where the action was fought, and where they got intelligence from a small boat that our squadron was last seen standing towards Holland, towards which they directed their course, and crowded all sail after us.

On the 3d of October, we arrived with our little squadron, off the Texel bar, from whence the commodore despatched his first

lieutenant in the barge, with a complimentary letter to the Dutch admiral who commanded several Dutch men of war then at anchor in the Texel Roads, requesting permission for the squadron under the command of the American commodore, then in the offing, to enter the Texel, and come to in the Road. At this time the Dutch were not at war with the English. The lieutenant soon after returned with an absolute refusal on the part of the Dutch admiral, alleging that his masters, meaning their High Mightinesses, would not approve of such a measure. By this time the English squadron spoken of above hove in sight; and our ship was certainly not in a condition to go into battle, as we had not men sufficient on board to man our great guns; besides, between decks were filled pretty much with wounded men, and who would be in the way of managing the heaviest cannon we had on board. No time was therefore to be lost; and Captain Jones with a presence of mind which never forsook him in the most critical situation, again dispatched his lieutenant and wrote the Dutch admiral, describing in the most forcible manner the danger his squadron was in, and closed this message by telling the Dutch admiral in spirited language, that if he the second time should refuse to grant his request, he must abide the consequence; for that if he (Jones) had not permission he should nevertheless on the return of his boat make sail and enter the Texel and place himself under the protection of the Dutch admiral. This had the desired effect, and the officer returned on board with a favourable answer from the admiral, and we having previous to that received pilots on board; the signal was made for entering the Texel Roads. The English were at this time but a little more than cannon-shot off. Arriving within the Dutch ships of war, the squadron came to anchor in about eight fathoms of water; where, before our ship (the *Serapis*) had furled her sails, the Dutch admiral sent his barge, with an officer in her, to compliment Captain Jones on his

safe arrival, and to beg his company on board the admiral's ship, which I think was called the Amsterdam. As soon as the commodore was seated in his barge the crews of the vessels of our squadron gave him three cheers, and on his return we saluted the Dutch admiral, and he returned the salute. This transaction must have been very gauling to the English on board of their fleet, then lying off and on without the bar, and who must have heard every gun, as they were not more than four miles from us. Soon after our arrival here we obtained liberty from the Stadtholder to land our sick and wounded men upon an island in the bay, the name of which I cannot recollect. * * * *

Captain Parsons, with his officers, were paroled upon the Helder by permission of the Prince of Orange, about a fortnight after our arrival in the Texel.

Not long after this, Captain L——,* who had commanded the *Alliance*, was suspended from his command by the American minister at Paris: This was done in consequence of Captain Jones's representation to the former of L——'s cowardice and bad conduct before we arrived here, and he was ordered to Paris. However, before he set out, he sent Captain Cotteneau, who commanded the *Pallais*, a written challenge to fight him: he accepted it, and both went on shore prepared with their seconds, &c., at the Helder, where they fought a duel with their swords. L——, came off victorious, and Cotteneau was very dangerously wounded.

L——, as soon as this was over, sent another written challenge to Captain Jones, but the latter, perhaps not thinking it prudent to expose himself with a single combatant, who was a complete master of the small sword, declined accepting the challenge; but answered the man who sent it, by ordering L—— under arrest, who hearing of

* Landais.

it, eluded those who were to execute this order, and immediately set out for Paris.

The captain of the *Serapis*, when taken, had silver plate and other articles in her cabin to a large amount, which according to the rules of war certainly belonged to the captors; but Captain Jones, instead of taking the advantage of this, had every article belonging to Captain Parsons packed together in trunks, and sent his lieutenant on shore to the Helder, with his compliments to Captain Parsons, and with these effects, together with directions for him to accept of them as coming from Captain Jones, who had certainly the best right to them of the two (wearing apparel belonging to himself* and servants excepted). The first lieutenant went on shore, delivered Captain Jones's message, and returned with the trunks, &c., and brought a verbal answer from this haughty English captain, purporting that he would not receive the articles in question, by the hands of a rebel officer; but at the same time intimated that he would receive the articles by the hands of Captain Cotteneau (who held his commission under the French king) and who was immediately sent for, and directed by Captain Jones to carry the articles on shore to Captain Parsons.† This commission Captain Cotteneau executed, and when he returned back reported to Captain Jones that Captain Parsons had graciously received the articles, but had not condescended to return any thanks or compliments to the former, which in my opinion shewed a great want of good breeding and politeness in the latter. All the English prisoners on board of the squadron were landed on an island,‡ amounting to five hundred and thirty-seven, and were here maintained by the American agent then residing at Amsterdam, by special permission of the Dutch government. About the same time, the English minister residing

* Parsons.
† His sword and pistols were also sent him.
‡ Near by where we lay.

at the Hague, and whose name I think was Sir Joseph Yorke, made heavy complaints to the Prince of Orange, and their High Mightinesses, on the score of our being in a Dutch port; and that they had suffered his Britannic majesty's rebel subjects to take refuge in the Texel who had made prizes of two of his Majesty's ships of war; and that the Dutch admiral had countenanced this measure, by protecting the said rebels, otherwise his majesty's ships which were dispatched from England on purpose to capture these rebel vessels, would have taken every one of them. Soon after this there appeared to be a coolness existing between the Dutch admiral and the American commodore, as they did not after this visit each other as usual.

Captain Jones now set off for Amsterdam, and was there well received by the Dutch, and treated with every mark of distinction, which gave great umbrage to the English minister, who had the impudence to require of the Dutch government the delivering up of the two English ships of war, and all the English prisoners then in our possession; and to this he demanded a categorical answer. The Dutch government were intimidated, and wished for time to deliberate upon so important a subject; the English minister was not willing to allow more than three days for the Dutch government to draw up an answer; this the government thought too short a time, and the minister threatened to leave the Hague and embark for England. While at Amsterdam, Captain Jones was caressed the same as though he had been in the Dutch service, and they at war with England; in fact he was treated as a conqueror. This so elated him with pride, that he had the vanity to go into the state house,* mount the balcony or piazza, and shew himself in the front thereof, to the populace and people of distinction then walking on the public parade. Not long after this, cartels were fitted up (at what

* A very magnificent building.

government's expense I never heard) and the English officers, together with all the English prisoners who had been captured by our little squadron, were embarked on board these cartels and sent to England: whether an equal number of American prisoners to the English were afterwards exchanged for them I know not; but this much I know, that Captain Jones assured us this was the case. The crews on board of our vessels at this time were so very sickly that we lost a number of men. We had now begun to repair the *Serapis*, and had employed a number of Dutch carpenters, who, together with our own, were busily at work, when orders were received from Amsterdam, from the Commodore, who was still there, to Mr. Dale, to get out the jury masts, and that we should have sent us from that place the next day, three new masts to replace those on board our ship which had been lost. Accordingly, carpenters as well as sailors, were immediately set to work in order to get ready for getting in the new masts that were expected. The next day counter orders arrived from the Commodore, and the jury were again erected and rigged as before, and preparations were again likewise made for sailing at a moment's warning; in this business the crews of the different ships in our squadron assisted us. The next day fresh orders were received from headquarters (Amsterdam), the purport of which was to unrig and get out the jury masts again, and make ready to receive the new masts. In fine, orders and counter orders were in like manner and form received on board of the *Serapis* every day for about ten days successively, which kept all hands constantly at work night and day; until at last we received our new masts alongside and got them in their places; got our topmasts on end, our yards athwart and rigged, provisions on board, and were once more ready for sea by the 16th of October;* when about ten o'clock at night of the same, the Commodore arrived on board from

* November is meant.—[Ed.]

Amsterdam, and gave immediate orders for all the officers and crew of the *Serapis* to evacuate her and repair on board of the frigate *Alliance*. These orders were executed with as much silence as possible, about midnight; and Captain Cotteneau of the *Pallais*, with a set of officers and crew, occupied our places on board of the *Serapis*, and the next morning the French colours were displayed on board of her. A French captain and crew at the same time possessed the *Countess of Scarborough*. All this, it seems, was done by advice having been received from the French ambassador then at the Hague, and the American agent at Amsterdam. This was done to obstruct the evil intentions of the Dutch government, who were about to deliver these prizes into the hands of the English. From the repeated remonstrances made to the Dutch government, accompanied with threats by the English minister, on account of these two English ships of war, taken by his Britannic Majesty's rebellious subjects, it was fully known that the Dutch government had come to a determination to deliver the two prizes in question up to the English. This, as it appeared afterwards, came to the knowledge of the French Minister and the American agent; they sent orders to abandon the two English ships, and to place each under a French captain, officers and crew of the same nation. This manoeuvre completely outgeneraled the English minister, and frustrated the designs of the Dutch government.

The French minister now claimed both prizes, in the name of the French King, of the Dutch; and stated at the same time, that they had been captured by his most Christian Majesty's subjects, and that if they delivered them up to the English, they must be sensible after such a breach of faith on their part, that he should immediately quit the Hague ('sans ceremonie') and repair to the French court. The English fleet were still lying off the Texel bar to receive the *Serapis* and the *Countess of Scarborough*, as the English

minister had acquainted the English commander, which was afterwards known by us from an intercepted letter to the English commander, that the Dutch government had agreed to deliver them upon a certain day. Soon after this the two prize ships having taken advantage of the English squadron's absence from off the bar, they having been driven by a violent gale of wind some distance to the Northward of it, put to sea and arrived safe at L'Orient, in France, together with the rest of the squadron, excepting the *Alliance* frigate.

Jones having now the command of the *Alliance*, at this time had two sets of officers actually on board, besides the remainder of the crew of the *Good Man Richard*, and her officers, and the officers which properly belonged to the *Alliance* made out the two sets. The whole number of officers and men now on board of that ship, including boys, amounted to four hundred and twenty-seven nearly all Americans. We now thought ourselves able to take any 44 gun ship in the British navy, and Captain Jones took much pains to impress this idea on the minds of his officers and crew.

A journal was found on board of the *Serapis*, well written, and formerly kept by a midshipman who had belonged to that ship, and who was killed in the late action. It seems by this journal that the young man who had kept it had been in America, and was on board of one of Lord Dunmore's vessels, which committed such ravages in the southern states, during our revolutionary war. I must confess that my blood was chilled, and my mind struck with horror, in perusing some of the pages of this journal. He vaunted the numerous exploits which he had performed in America against the rebels. It seems by his own story, that he had murdered numbers of decrepit old men and women! * * * * I had a mind at first to have this curious journal printed, to hold up to the view of my countrymen

*Omitted because unfit to print.—[Ed.]

and countrywomen, a specimen of *British humanity!* But, reflecting that this young Englishman might have still living, an aged father and mother, and perhaps sisters too; and that its publicity might wound their feelings; and, notwithstanding the enormities which this young man had been guilty of, his parents, sisters and brothers, might be possessed of all the tender feelings of humanity. Besides, he might have been prompted to commit these horrid deeds by examples set him by his superior officers. And in addition thereto, what finally urged me not to make his journal in detail public, was, conforming myself to the good old adage which says, 'we should never speak ill of the dead!'

We were now ready for sailing, but the British squadron before spoken of blockaded the entrance of the Texel, and we were obliged still to continue in our present situation. The *Alliance* was now unrigged, her yards and topmasts were got down by Capt. Jones's orders; her tops were also got down upon deck, and the carpenters were directed to make new ones, and to make them large so as to hold more men, as Jones had, it seems, a great opinion since the late battle, of having always several men stationed in the top of a ship of war. Our main and fore yards were at the same time reduced in bigness, as well as in length; before this, those yards were nearly as large and as square as an English 74's.

Two of our midshipmen, Choram and Morant, expressed their wishes to Captain Jones to leave the service; and as they had while with him, been only volunteers on board, Captain Jones consented, and gave each a certificate, and one was also given at the same time to myself and the other midshipmen, six in number* who

* The Midshipmen were: Reuben Chase—Benjamin Stubbs—Thomas Potter—Beaumont Groube (or Grubb)—John Mayrant (of S. C.)—John Linthwaite (of S. C.)—William Daniel—Richard Coram (of N. H.) (Jones says of S. C.)—Nathaniel Fanning—(Sherburne adds the name of Benjamin Lundy).

Chase's great-granddaughter Miss Mary J. Chase is still living at Nantucket, Mass. Chase is said to have been the model for Cooper's "Long Tom Coffin."—[Ed.]

had served with him in the late cruise, couched in substance as follows:

To the honourable the President of Congress of the United States of America:

These certify, that the bearer having served under my command in the capacity of midshipman on board of the *Good Man Richard*, a ship of war belonging to the United States, until she was lost in the action with the *Serapis*, an English ship of war of superior force; and since on board of the last mentioned ship and *Alliance* frigate, his bravery and good conduct on board of the first mentioned ship and while he has been in the service, will, I hope, recommend him to the notice of Congress, and his country, and believing as I do, that he will in a higher station, make a meritorious and deserving sea officer, I subscribe myself to these presents.

(Signed) J. P. JONES.

Done on board of the United States frigate Alliance this 10*th day of December*, 1779.

It must be here acknowledged that Captain Jones treated his midshipmen with a good deal of respect in some particulars, and in others with a degree of severity. I will mention instances of both, and leave the reader to judge whether my assertions are correct. It was a constant practise with Captain Jones every day, to invite two midshipmen to dine with him; there were six of us in all, four of whom were rated upon the ship's books, the other two were only active* midshipmen, and these received no pay for their services. When we went to dine with him we were obliged to appear in the great cabin, with our best clothes on, otherwise we were sure not to meet with a favourable reception from him. He almost always conversed with his midshipmen as freely as he did with his lieuten-

*Acting.

ants, sailing master or purser; but he made us do our duty. When at sea, he would always, I mean in the daytime, have one midshipman aloft to look out, either upon the main top gallant yard or main top gallant cross trees, or upon the fore top gallant yard or fore top gallant cross trees. And it sometimes happened that when one sat upon the top gallant yard, and Jones thought he was not as attentive as he ought to be in looking out, he would himself let go the top gallant haulyards, and the poor midshipman would come down by the run until the lifts of the yard brought him up of a sudden, and he would, you may be sure, feel himself happy, if he did not by the shock get severely hurt, I had almost said unmercifully. Another piece of duty which he required of his midshipmen, and that was that whenever all hands were called to reef the topsails, or to shake the reef out of them, one midshipman was obliged to be at each yard arm to pass the earings. And whenever this happened, that all hands were called to reef or let reefs out of the topsails, especially when perhaps it might arrive when the greater number of us were asleep in our berths. It was quite laughable to see at such a time, what a scrambling there would be with the poor midshipmen; some would mount aloft without anything on but their shirt, and perhaps a thin pair of drawers, all with a view of getting upon the weather yard arms. I have myself many a time mounted aloft in this plight. Thus much I presume will suffice for this class of Jones's officers.

The Dutch had lying at anchor in the Texel at this time one 64, on board of which was hoisted the Dutch admiral's flag, several 50's and frigates. On the morning of the 17th of December, the Dutch admiral sent his barge on board of us with an officer, who told Captain Jones that the admiral had no orders to countenance the American flag, and I am commanded by him, says he, to tell you that you must immediately get under way and stand off to sea,

unless you wish to incur the admiral's highest displeasure. Captain Jones heard this message delivered without appearing to be offended and dismissed the officer after having treated him in a very polite manner, telling him to acquaint the admiral that as soon as the wind was fair, his intentions were to go to sea. At this time the *Alliance* was the only American ship in the Texel which wore the thirteen stripes.

The English squadron were still cruising in the offing, and were in sight of us almost every day. Notwithstanding this Jones did not like to be thus shut up in port; the active and enterprising genius that possessed his breast could not brook this. Besides, the Dutch admiral tormented him with insolent messages. And at length it became customary for him to send his barge every day with a Dutch officer in her to command us to depart; sometimes this order came accompanied with threats, and at other times with fair words. This farce continued for several days, during which time the wind remained contrary. At last Jones became weary of being thus used, and he in a very passionate manner, sent word to the Dutch admiral that he did not like to be imposed upon; and that although he (the admiral) had the honour of commanding a 64 gun ship, yet if he was at sea with the *Alliance*, the admiral would not dare to insult him there, in such an abusive manner as he had here done. After this the Admiral sent his barge no more on board of us, till the day on which we sailed from the Texel; at which time he sent his boats to assist us in getting under way, and in working out over the bar. This took place on the 28th day of December, about ten in the morning, and at meridian we had got pretty clear of the bar, when we descried two ships in the offing standing directly for us. We soon discovered them to be two ships of war, and they approached us nearly within gun shot, then tacked,

hoisted English colours, and stood from us.* At the same time all hands were at quarters on board of our ship and my station was in the maintop as before. It is my opinion, that if these two English ships of war had now engaged us, we should have given them *Yankee play;* and the night of the 22d of September would have been acted over again. However, it evidently appeared by their manoeuvering that they were afraid of us. We did not alter our course, the wind being fair for the Straits of Dover or English Channel, to which place we shaped our course. The two English ships of war kept in sight of us, and we were called to quarters several times during the night past. They kept on dogging us; sometimes they would shorten sail and drop astern of us, and sometimes they would make sail as though it was their intention to come alongside of us and give us battle. And as soon as they saw we were prepared to receive them, they would sheer off and keep out of gun shot. On the 1st day of January, 1780, we were abreast of Goodwin Sands, and saw several English men of war lying within them. Our thirteen stripes now floated over our stern, and we had a long streaming pendant aloft, and an American Jack set forward. I believe those John Englishmen who now saw us thought we were pretty saucy fellows, and they were perhaps the first American colours some of them had ever seen.

At 2 P.M. the two frigates which had dogged us from the Texel bar came very near us, and by their manoeuvering appeared to be making preparations to engage us; however, as soon as they had come within long gun shot (for Captain Jones had directed those who had charge of our great guns not to fire upon the enemy, until they were within pistol shot) they immediately tacked ship and stood from us a great distance. After which they tacked ship and

* We learned afterwards that one of these ships was a 28 and the other a 32 gun frigate, sent express from England to relieve the English squadron off the Texel, and to take us.

stood for us again for some time. We now sailed very quietly along the English shore, it being upon our starboard hand about two leagues, with a fine leading breeze at about N.E. with American colours waving in the air and nearly all sail set, and appeared, to be sure, to bid defiance to old England and her wooden walls. The Yankees had now spirit and resolution enough to batter some of them to pieces if they would but give us a fair trial. We had by this time got abreast of the east end of the Isle of Wight, and could plainly see the English fleet of men of war lying at anchor at Spithead. The two frigates which had threatened to give us battle so often now appeared to be resolved to have it realized. Accordingly, the largest ship who appeared to be the commodore's, hoisted his broad pendant, by way of giving us a challenge, and made several signals which we could not understand, and both ships hauled up their courses, handed their top gallant sails, and appeared to be slinging their yards: this now looked like coming to the point in good earnest. On board of our ship we were ready and in high spirits, and every officer, man and boy, to his station. We had shortened sail for the enemy to come up to us, as we had done all along when we thought they wished to come alongside of us. The enemy had now got within musket shot of us, and we expected the action would commence in one or two minutes more—no such thing took place. The enemy, as we supposed, frightened at our formidable and warlike appearance, all at once dropped their courses, got on board their fore and main tacks and trimmed their sails by the wind, took to their heels and ran away. We made sail after the cowards, and was fast gaining on them, when we found we were chased in our turn by an English ship of the line which had slipped her cables at Spithead on perceiving that we were an enemy. We could now comprehend what the largest of the two English frigates made those signals for, which I made mention of; it was no

less than acknowledging that they were not a match for one American frigate, but that they were pretty well assured they would be able to capture us with the assistance of one of their line of battle ships.

After this circumstance comes to be made public, I hope we shall hear no more braggadocio boastings from Englishmen: such as that of one Englishman being able to beat two Yankees, or that one frigate of 36 guns, officered and manned with full-blooded Englishmen was able and could with ease capture two American frigates in consort, each of 36 guns, and officered and manned with full-blooded Yankees.* These, and the like expressions were quite frequent with them when I was a prisoner among them, both at sea and on shore. The English ship of the line by this time finding we outsailed her took in her steering sails and hauled upon a wind towards the English shore, and we soon lost sight of her. We cruised several days between Ushant and the land's end of England, during which time we met with nothing but neutral ships and small vessels. We afterwards shaped our course and steered for Cape Finester.

There is one circumstance which I had forgot to mention which is this: During our cruise in the *Good Man Richard* we had captured several prizes, in consequence of which Captain Jones's officers and crew while we lay at the Texel, thought they had a right to some small advance in money on account of their prize money; particularly the first, who had lost all their clothes in the late action. Captain Jones was petitioned on this account by both officers and men repeatedly, as their wants had become very urgent on account of the severe cold weather; and it appeared to us all to be cruel to oblige us to go to sea in our then almost naked situation. Jones

* I often hear Englishmen make such kind of bombastic expressions in the United States, who on my merely mentioning in their hearing the battle between the *Good Man Richard* and the *Serapis* will shut their mouths and walk off humming for some time to themselves as though they did not hear me.

made fair promises from time to time; and at length a few days before we sailed from the Texel we were informed that there was a large sum of money sent on board of our ship from the American agent at Amsterdam; and that it was to be distributed among the officers, men and boys belonging to, or who did belong to the *Good Man Richard*, but when it came to be divided the officers received only about five ducats apiece, without having any regard to rank, and the sailors, marines, boys, &c., one ducat each (not far from half a guinea). We were all very much disappointed, but particularly the sailors, some of whom, as soon as they had received each a ducat in a fit of rage, threw them as far as they could from the ship into the sea. Who was to blame I know not; neither do I know how much money was sent on board of our ship at this time. However, it was said, and believed by most of Captain Jones's officers, that he had reserved the greater part of this money for himself.

In a few days after this affair, shaping our course for Cape Finester we made the land and the third day after our arrival here we took two prizes laden with powder, lead, &c., which we manned and ordered them both to the United States. And after cruising here several days longer, being in want of water and fresh provisions we put into Caronia,* in Spain. While we lay here numbers of the Spaniards came on board to see us and our ship. Among them were some of the Spanish nobility, who, when they arrived on board, took much pains to let us know they were of that order by showing our officers as they came upon our quarterdeck their finger nails, which were remarkably long and clean; in consequence of which they expected a great deal of attention paid to them while they remained on board. This port is a very remarkably good one for large ships; the harbour is large, and vessels may here ride at anchor with safety, it being entirely *land-locked*. It lies in latitude

*Corunna.

37.30 north, and in longitude 5.35 west. The town is pretty large and built mostly of white hewn stone; the dwelling-houses are from three to five stories high; the land which encompasses the harbour is also very high.

We lay at this place about a fortnight, got what provisions and other necessaries which we stood in need of, and then Captain Jones ordered the frigate to be got under way; but the sailors refused to assist and declared that they would not do their duty, nor go to sea again without first having received part of their wages then due, or some part of their prize money, which last they said ought to have been paid to them long since, as Captain Jones had promised them before we left the Texel, upon his *honour* and *credit* that he would go direct from that place to L'Orient in France, where they should soon after our arrival have their prize money paid them; but contrary to his promise he had cruised several weeks at sea without attempting to get into that port. Jones now used every kind of persuasion to the sailors in order to get them willing to go to their duty, but all to no purpose. They remained inflexible, and appeared to adhere to their determination of not going to sea again without money. He then urged his officers to try their endeavours to prevail upon the sailors to do their duty; who at length succeeded by fair promises, &c., with a part of them to get the ship under way. Jones here declared again in the presence of his officers and crew, and pledged his word and honour, that as soon as his ship was clear of the land, she should make the best of her way to L'Orient, the wind being favourable to steer for that port, where he said he wished to arrive as soon as possible. The ship had now got under way and stood out for sea. We had got but a few miles from the land before Jones had his officers convened in the great cabin, where after a short and pertinent harangue, he told them his intentions were to cruise at sea about twenty days before he should proceed to L'Orient

and says he, with a kind of contemptuous smile, which he was much addicted to: 'Gentlemen, you cannot conceive what an additional honour it will be to us all, if in cruising a few days we should have the good luck to fall in with an English frigate of our force, and carry her in with us;' and added 'this would crown our former victories, and our names, in consequence thereof would be handed down to the latest posterity, by some faithful historian of our country.'* We told him we had no objections to cruising a few days longer, had we but clothes to shift ourselves, as he well knew that we had lost all our wearing apparel in the late action excepting what we then had on; that it was the winter season and that he must be sensible we were not in a situation to remain upon deck and do our duty. In fine, we assured him (all being agreed) that in our present disagreeable circumstances we could not think of cruising any longer; and one of Captain Jones's lieutenants added, that his crew were then in a state bordering upon mutiny, and that in his belief we should hazard our own lives by such a procedure.†[1] 'Well then,' says Jones, 'I mean to cruise as long as I please. I do not want your advice, neither did I send for you to comply with your denial, but only by way of paying you a compliment which is more than you deserve, by your opposition. Therefore you know my mind. Go to your duty, each one of you, and let me hear no more grumbling.' He said this in a rage, and with a stamp of the foot, and bade us get out of his sight. We obeyed these absolute commands, and the *Alliance* continued to cruise seventeen days longer, during which time we saw an English frigate, and came so near her that we saw plainly she was a 32 gun ship, but our crew swore they would not fight, although if we had been united we might have taken her

* Jones had a wonderful notion of his name being handed down to posterity.

† Our crew at this time were certainly ripe for a revolt.

[1] That the loss of the *Chesapeake* was due in part to refusal of payment of prize money, is matter of history.—[Ed.]

with a great deal of ease. This being known to Captain Jones, our courses were dropped, and we in our turn ran from her, and made all the sail we could, by his orders. All this time he appeared much agitated, and bit his lips often, and walked the quarterdeck muttering something to himself. Night set in, and we lost sight of the frigate who was in chase of us. Three days after, we arrived safe in the port of L'Orient, came to anchor and moored ship. Here we found the *Serapis* with several of our prizes; this was in February. Soon after we had orders from the American minister at Paris, to get the *Alliance* ready for sea again with all possible dispatch in order to carry the public dispatches (or mail) to America.

During the last cruise in the *Alliance* Captain Jones's officers who had belonged to the *Good Man Richard*, and captain L——'s' officers often had high words and squabbles with each other in the ward-room (as I before observed we had two sets of officers on board of the *Alliance*). Their quarrels were so frequent that they would sometimes challenge one another, all on account of the cowardice of Captain L—— during the late battle. His officers, or those who had served under him, maintained that L—— was as brave a man and had been as often proved as Captain Jones. The officers of the latter as strenuously maintained quite the reverse of this; so that our ward-room during the last cruise exhibited nothing but wrangling, jangling and a scene of discord among our superior officers.

We that had belonged to the *Good Man Richard* until she was lost, now applied to a Mr. Moylan, the American agent here, and who appeared to be the agent in fitting her out from this port prior to her last cruise. I say, we made application to him for our prize money, who declared to us that he had nothing to do with our prize money, and that we must apply to the board of war in America for it. In consequence of this, a number of Americans became beggars in a

foreign country, especially such as had lost their legs and arms in fighting gloriously under the banners of America. Application was sometime afterwards made to the board of war in Philadelphia by several who were interested in this business. When the honourable board declared that the *Good Man Richard* was not originally fitted out by order of Congress* or any of their ministers, but gave it as their opinion that she was a French privateer. And we were never able to learn after this whether that ship belonged to the French or Americans; but this we knew at the time, that we had fought on board of the *Good Man Richard* under American colours, and that our prizes were sold in France, and the monies arising from such sales has since been collected, the greater part of which is in the hands of Monsieur Chaumont, who lives in the city of Paris.

Great alterations were now made by the carpenters on board of the *Alliance* frigate in almost every part of the ship, which put the United States to a vast and unnecessary expense. However, Jones was now so well suited with the command of her that he would have every thing done and altered to please his fancy on board of her; not I presume, regarding what it cost, only as a secondary consideration. The *Alliance* was however ready for sea by the middle of June, 1780, and only waited for a wind to proceed for America.

About this time we heard that Captain L——, who had commanded this ship had arrived in L'Orient, but it seems he went about that place incog. He soon notwithstanding this, came publicly forward upon the stage and acted the part of a leading character as follows: one day (I think it was the 23d of June) at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, Captain Jones's officers (who were not then on shore) were below at dinner, and Captain Jones had gone on shore

*All the dispatches which Jones wrote at the time he commanded that ship were directed to the president of Congress. This is a fact.

to dine with the commandant of that place. L——'s officers at this time were nearly all upon the quarterdeck (being no doubt in the plot) of which the first knowledge we (who were below) had of it, we heard above three loud huzzas. Such a sudden manoeuver surprised us, and we got upon the quarterdeck as soon as our legs could carry us. Here L—— was walking fore and aft with a paper in his hand, and the yards were manned. He immediately gave orders to Mr. Diggs, formerly first lieutenant to him, to cause all Captain Jones's officers to come upon the deck, as he had something to say to them. They were all mustered accordingly, and as soon as they made their appearance; he, holding his commission in his hand at the same time, addressed them in nearly the following words: "Here you see, gentlemen, the commission that the Congress did give me' (as he did not speak very good English) 'for this frigate, and you see I now command her; and that there is no man in France who has a right to take this commission from me; therefore, gentlemen, all you who do not acknowledge me to be captain of this ship you must directly to the shore go, taking along with you your baggage and everything which belongs to you." Accordingly, there was no other alternative left us but to obey these orders; so that all the officers who had served on board of the *Good Man Richard* under Capt. Jones were forced to leave the *Alliance*, excepting one or two who chose to remain on board. However, L—— forbid any of the crew quitting her. The *Alliance* in about three-quarters of an hour after this, with the assistance of part of the crews of several men of war then lying in the harbour, unmoored her, made sail, passed the citadel without molestation, and came to anchor under the Isle of Groix,* without gun shot of any of the French fortifications. Jones being on shore when this singular manoeuver took place, and not hearing anything of it till the

*This should be Groaix, off L'Orient.

Alliance was safe at anchor, as I just observed. Never, I am confident, was a man so dreadfully enraged. His passion knew no bounds; and in the first paroxysm of his rage he acted more like a mad man than a conqueror. However, as he now saw that he was out-generaled by L—— his sworn enemy, he at length became more calm. The French commandant, at whose table he was sitting when he heard this news, offered him all the assistance in his power, and he appeared to entertain some hopes of getting the *Alliance* again into his possession. For this purpose he obtained leave of the commandant and French general, to possess himself of a row galley then lying at the key, and which mounted 2 eighteen pounders forward and one abaft, rowed with sixteen oars, and was rigged with latine sails. He was also furnished for this expedition with about three hundred (if I am not mistaken) French troops, who were partly embarked on board of the row galley, and the rest on board of boats. Jones flattered himself that this force was able to take the *Alliance;* and besides, he did not much expect that Captain L——, nor his officers and crew, would make any resistance. He required all his old officers who had served under him, to join and lend their assistance in this Don Quixote undertaking; but they all declined having anything to do with or acting in this affair, excepting one of his lieutenants, who had the honour of commanding this expedition. He (Jones) very prudently declined embarking, which in my opinion he ought to have done. In that case I have no doubt that all his officers would have resigned their lives with him. Everything being in readiness, the little squadron moved out of the harbour wearing American and French colours, and proceeded on towards the Isle of Groix, where the *Alliance* was at anchor. The captain of which* sent a flag with a message

* L—— had been apprized of their coming to take them, and was prepared to give them a warm reception, all hands being at quarters.

to the commander of the expedition the purport of which was that 'If they came within the reach of his cannon he would sink them.'* The little fleet then lay upon their oars a few minutes, after which they turned tail and returned back into port no wiser than when they set out upon this wonderful expedition. Jones, upon seeing them return without taking the *Alliance*, was so enraged that he could hardly contain himself for some time. He swore bitterly—he stamped—he cursed, and grew almost frantic with rage. Three French ships of the line were lying in the harbour at this time, and Jones, with the help of the commandant, endeavoured to prevail with the French admiral to send out one or two of those ships (which had their sails bent and were ready for sailing) in order to force the *Alliance* to return back to port. But the admiral refused, and told Captain Jones that he should not interfere in the quarrel between him and captain L—. Besides, he assured Captain Jones that it was more than his commission was worth, taking his head into the bargain, for him to order the departure of either of the ships under his command; more especially on such a piece of service as that was, which Captain Jones wished her to be sent upon. The fact was, this same French admiral was at the very time as deep in the *mud* as L—— was in the *mire;* and so was the commander of the citadel, commonly called Fort Lewis, or Louis. L—— had been to this last place sundry times, as well as on board of the French admiral, where the plot or conspiracy was first agitated, of taking the *Alliance* out of Jones's hands, and where it was brought to maturity, and succeeded as I have related.

In a day or two after this transaction Mr. Lee,† with the pub-

* They were then about a mile from the *Alliance.*

† Came from Paris, and who I believe had been an American ambassador to some one of the foreign courts.

lic mail, were embarked on board of the frigate *Alliance*, and set sail for America. And on her passage thither the captain and first lieutenant were confined to their cabins by the other officers belonging to her, because they had refused to fight an English 32 gun frigate, who it seems had at sundry times offered them battle. Arriving in Boston, Captain L—— and his officers (I believe the first lieutenant and sailing master) were tried by a Court composed of navy officers in the United States service, were broke, and sentenced never to serve, or be capable of serving in the navy again in the character of officers.*

Capt. Jones was now left to wander about without a ship to set his foot on board of. He took a trip to Paris to try his luck, and to spend our money then in the hands of Mr. Chaumont. While there he was very much caressed by the king and queen. The former made him a present of an elegant gold hilted *sword* set in diamonds, valued at about one hundred guineas, on account of his bravery on board of the *Good Man Richard.* And the queen, while he was at Paris, at the performance of a play at one of the theatres, invited him to sit with her in her own box, and at the same time made him a present of an elegant *nose-gay.* These circumstances gave great umbrage to the king's officers who belonged to his navy, and who were then at Paris, in his service.

About the middle of July, Captain Jones returned from Paris to L'Orient, and made interest to get the command of a ship of war called the *Ariel.* She was rated a 20 gun ship, although she mounted 24 guns, six and nine pounders, and which ship had lately been captured by the French from the English. She then lay in dock, and carpenters as well as seamen were ordered to go to work upon her in order to get her ready for sea with all possible despatch.

*I do not assert this as fact, otherwise than having afterwards read such a paragraph in France in one of the newspapers, printed in Boston in the United States, and which I pointed out to Mr. L——'s third lieutenant.

Jones's influence was so great, and the people here caressed him in such a manner, that he was called king of Brittany. L'Orient is in this province, known in French by the name of 'La province de Britagne.' His power over the general and commandant especially was astonishing, and in consequence thereof the inhabitants of L'Orient thought he deserved that title.

On the 7th of October, 1780, we set sail from this port for the United States in the *Ariel*, at about 6 P.M. and at the time we had under our convoy fourteen sail of American vessels, among which were three letters of marque, with the wind blowing a leading gale, at E.S.E. At 10 P.M. the wind shifted suddenly into the W.S.W. and blew a heavy gale—took in top gallant sails, and close reefed our courses, and we carried them as long as the ship would bear them. The night was very dark, and we lost sight of the fleet. We were obliged to carry some sail in order to weather the *Pin Marks*,* a long range of sunken rocks about a league from the land, and which we judged to be to leeward of us. At midnight we were obliged to hand our courses, as it blew so violent that we could not suffer a single yard of canvas. The ship at the same time lay in a very dangerous situation, nearly upon her beam ends, and in the trough of the sea, and leaked so bad that with both chain pumps constantly going we could not keep her free. Some French soldiers which we had on board, and who were stationed at the cranks of the pumps, let go of them, crossed themselves and went to prayers. They were driven from this by the officers to the cranks again; and it became necessary to keep lifted naked hangers over their heads, and threaten them with instant death if they quit their duty, or if they did not work with all their strength; without this, they would again leave off and go to prayers. Soon after, one of our

* This is variously spelled—in a contemporary French map, Penmarc, in a later Penmarch, and in the latest English atlas Penmark.

chain pumps got choked in such a manner that it would deliver no water. Jones in all this time shewed a great deal of presence of mind, and kept, with his own hands, sounding with the deep sea lead; and at last finding that we were shoaling water very fast, and that we should in a short time be upon the Pin Marks, without something was soon done to prevent it. In this extremity a consultation of Captain Jones and his principal officers was had upon the quarterdeck, and the result was, that orders were given for cutting away our fore-mast, and letting go the sheet anchor; and the latter was executed without loss of time. We sounded now in thirty-five fathoms of water. The sheet cable was now paid out to the bitter end: but she did not look to her anchor; and her cable was spliced to the first, and paid out to the bitter end; she did not yet bring up; the third cable was also spliced to the end of the second; when after paying out about seven-eighths of this last, and the fore-mast cut away at the same tine, and when it had fell overboard to the leeward, the ship brought to and rid head to the wind and the sea now run mountains high.* By the time of which I am now speaking we had not less than three hundred fathoms of cable paid out—in a few minutes after the ship brought to her anchor. The ship laboured so hard, rolled so deep, and would bring up so sudden, that it sprung our main mast, just below our gun-deck, and as this was now in the greatest danger of being ripped up, orders were given to cut away the main-mast above the quarterdeck, which was immediately carried into execution; and when this fell over the side to leeward, it forced off the head of the mizzen-mast. By this time we had freed the ship of water, but when her masts were gone her motion was so quick and violent, that the most expert seamen on board could not stand upon their legs, neither upon the quarterdeck nor forecastle without holding on to some-

* This was in the Bay of Biscay.

thing. The chain pump which had been choked was cleaned, and notwithstanding the gale kept increasing, yet our anchor and cables held on so well, that some faint hopes were now entertained that our lives would be spared: however the gale did not abate much until the morning of the 9th. At meridian of this day the wind had abated so much that we began to erect and rig our jury masts. At 4 P.M. we had them erected and rigged, and what spars and sails we could muster upon them; and there being at this time but a moderate breeze at about W.N.W., a fair wind for L'Orient and the sea tolerable smooth, we hove in upon our cable till it was short apeak, and then exerted ourselves every way which we could think of in order to purchase our anchor, and after trying a long time without being able to weigh it, orders were given by Captain Jones to save all we could of the cable and then cut it away, which was done and we made sail for L'Orient where we soon after arrived and came to anchor. Many of our friends now came on board to see us and appeared to be rejoiced at our safe escape, as they said they expected we were lost, as the gale was very violent and did a great deal of damage even in the harbour, among the shipping. and alongside of the keys.

Before we last sailed from this port in the *Ariel*, a number of American gentlemen came on board of us in order to take a passage with us for America. Some of them tarried on board with us with that view, and were with us in the late gale of wind, among whom was a young gentleman by the name of Sullivan, and who said he was a nephew of one of the American generals of that name. He had, it appeared, served some time in the quality of a lieutenant in Count Dillon's brigade in the French service, and the brigade was at this time stationed in garrison at Fort Louis, near L'Orient. He brought on board when he first arrived from Paris, and which were shown to Captain Jones's officers, several open letters of the best

recommendations from some of the first characters in that city, to some of the first officers in the American army. Besides, he had one letter from doctor Franklin to Captain Jones, in which the doctor desired Jones to take young Sullivan on board, treat him with kindness; and moreover, to give him his passage. Captain Jones's abusive treatment of this young man, who came on board with such unquestionable recommendations deserves a place in my journal. And as I was an eye witness to the whole of Jones's conduct towards this young gentleman, I shall here proceed to relate nothing but stubborn facts; the reader will, nevertheless, be at perfect liberty whether to believe them or not.

After the ship *Ariel* had returned to L'Orient and had come to anchor, all the passengers got ready to go on shore, and had their trunks embarked on board of the boats, which lay ready alongside of the ship to receive them. Young Sullivan among the rest, had made a preparation to go on shore also; when Captain Jones solicited him in a very polite manner, to tarry on board two or three days in order to have an eye to the marines, and see that they did their duty: in fine, to act as captain of marines, as the person who filled that station on board of our ship at that time was confined to a sick bed. Telling him (Sullivan) that he would fare equally as well on board as on shore, it would be expensive living there which in remaining on board, he would save. To this request, made in such a plausible way, the young man in question consented, and told Captain Jones that he would remain on board the time which Captain Jones requested him, and after which he should take the liberty to go on shore when he pleased, until the ship was ready to sail for America. Jones replied, that he should have no objections to that, for as he was considered on board of his ship only as a passenger, and in that character he (Sullivan) had an undoubted right to go where and when he pleased. Four days after this conversation was held, the

latter had a mind to go on shore, but Jones urged him to remain two or three days longer as the captain of the marines was not yet about. This was also assented to. After this time had expired, another request was made by Jones, for this young man to remain on board as much longer. And finally this kind of request was so often repeated that Sullivan lost all patience, and even command over himself, and told Jones in a manner somewhat harsh, that he had never been accustomed to such treatment, and not being under any obligation to him, he should take his baggage out of the ship, and go on shore in the very next boat which came alongside. 'What is that you say, you rascal,' says Jones, drawing his sword out of the scabbard and rushed on to Sullivan, 'Not a word! I will run you through in an instant!' To this the latter very calmly replied, without appearing to be intimidated in the least, and without retiring back an inch, 'You are on board of your own ship, Captain Jones, therefore I know the consequence of making at this time any resistance; but sir, remember what I have now the honour to say to you; if I have the good luck to see you on shore, depend upon it, I will make you repent of this unheard of insult and cruelty." To this Jones made no reply but as he went over the ship's side to go on shore, he directed his first lieutenant to have him turned below among the ship's crew, and to order the master at arms to put the rascal in irons, hands and feet, which was executed without delay. Some few days after this Jones's officers ventured to solicit Captain Jones, that Mr. Sullivan's hands might be liberated from irons, which he reluctantly consented to.

Some time after, the officers in Count Dillon's brigade heard of the ill treatment of their brother officer by Captain Jones, and one of the colonels of that brigade came on board of our ship, to know if it was true (having been intimately acquainted with Mr. S.). He mentioned to Captain Jones as soon as he came on board,

his business. But Jones, perhaps thinking that he had carried the ill usage of Mr. Sullivan rather farther than he was aware of, consequently he now imagined that a little dissimulation was become necessary, as he well knew that this colonel was a man of courage, and that if he found the treatment of young Sullivan as bad as he had heard it to be on shore, and among the officers of the brigade, he would give Captain Jones a severe drubbing. He invited the colonel below into the great cabin, and after taking a glass or two of wine, he invited the colonel to remain on board and dine with him, which the latter consented to. In the meantime Jones and the colonel fell into a chat, and the colonel expressed a wish to see young Sullivan. This was a subject that Jones wanted to keep out of sight as much as possible; he therefore told the colonel that as to the story of Mr. Sullivan having been put in irons on board of his ship, or ever having been ill used, it was absolutely false. 'What is the reason then, that I have not seen him on shore since your ship returned back to this port?' replied the colonel. 'Because,' says Jones, 'he has been sick, and confined to his cabin since our return.' 'Cannot I see him now?' said the colonel. 'Presently,' replied Jones, 'he is dressing himself, and I have ordered my servant to tell him to give his attendance where we are, as soon as he is dressed.' The colonel appeared satisfied, and they both entered into conversation, and when it began to flag, the colonel broached the subject of the battle between the *Serapis* and the *Good Man Richard.* This was the very point upon which Jones appeared to wish the colonel's attention drawn, as he could now dwell with pleasure upon it and spin it out till dinner was served up; and while this relation was going on, it would keep the colonel's business dormant. The latter being a great lover of good wine Jones now plyed him with it so frequent, that after an hour or two's sitting the colonel went away with Jones *half-seas over*, and I presume thought no more for that

time of his friend Sullivan. A few days after, the latter being still confined in irons, Jones met the colonel on shore, who told him he believed what he had heard of Sullivan's being harshly treated, and of his being in irons, and of Captain Jones's refusal to let him come on shore, therefore says the colonel, raising his voice that he might be heard by the bystanders: 'If you do not liberate him shortly, and give him leave to come on shore, I shall myself take the matter up and learn you better manners.' This threat frightened Jones into submission, and he promised the colonel that the prisoner in question should be set at liberty. Accordingly when he came on board, he directed his first lieutenant to cause the young man to be taken out of irons, and to turn him forward and make him do his duty as a common man. These directions Sullivan submitted to, and his baggage was ordered forward, where he was told he might, if they were willing, mess with the boatswain's mates. However, the midshipmen, unknown to Jones, provided a comfortable lodging for him in one of the ship's staterooms, and allowed him to mess with them.

The next time Captain Jones met the colonel on shore, the latter threatened to run him through the body with his drawn sword for not suffering Mr. S. to come on shore, as he had promised him. 'And now sir (said the Colonel) I will wait here till you go on board of your ship and send him to me. I shall tarry here till you have had time to go on board and order him on shore and if this is not complied with instantly, you may repent of it at your leisure.' Jones promised it should be done; and therefore came on board, ordered me to have the jolly boat manned, and to take Sullivan and his baggage on shore. Previous however to his embarking his sword was broken in pieces by Jones's orders. He was set on shore near where the colonel was waiting for him and they met. The colonel and Sullivan then walked away together, as I supposed, to

consult upon measures which foreboded no good to Jones. The fact was there appeared to be a squall gathering, and it did not require a great deal of divination in any one who knew Sullivan's temper and courage, to predict on whose head it would fall. The first thing he did after landing was, to purchase a sword, and a good hickory cane. This done, he proceeded to Jones's private lodgings, opened the door of the room where he was (and as the French say 'sans ceremonie'—without any ceremony) and being unaccompanied with a second, he addressed himself to him in the following manner:

'Captain Jones you are sensible of your abusive and more than savage treatment of me while on board of your ship, and I presume you have not forgot that it was there that I promised to chastise you for it. I have now come to demand satisfaction of you. And, Sir, if you refuse to step aside with me at this time to settle the business in an honorable way, with our swords, I will here make you feel the weight of my cane.' And at the same time he advanced near Jones and lifted it over his head where it remained suspended till the latter gave his answer. Jones was then sitting at a desk with his back towards his antagonist, and had been writing. The pen he put in his mouth, and there it remained while Mr. S. was speaking to him. He then laid it down and turning his head over his left shoulder, made this laconic reply: 'Sir, I do not put myself upon equal terms with every rascal who chuses to call me to an account when he thinks himself abused by me. No, Sir, I shall not fight you; therefore begone out of my room directly, or I will call the guard to take into their custody a madman or an assassin.' These words were no sooner out of Jones's mouth than Mr. Sullivan mauled him in a most shocking manner, until the former bawled out—Murder! help! help! help! Mr. Sullivan kept repeating the blows till the blood ran pretty freely, and until he was nearly exhausted. He then

left him to his own reflections. As soon as Jones had got the better of his fright, he went to the French commandant, who was his particular friend, and lodged a complaint in form against Sullivan, but the latter had taken himself off.

This business occasioned a great hue and cry throughout the town. The officers of justice, the guards, the police, were now sent out in all directions, and had orders to search, or even to break open dwelling houses (and others) in order to secure Sullivan, so that he might be brought to condign punishment. Besides all these movements in town, a party of light horse were dispatched into the country with orders to scour the public roads, and to take the runaway and bring him back, dead or alive. And it is a notorious fact, that while all this bustle and noise was made in the town of L'Orient on account of young Sullivan, he was as safe as a thief in a mill, at Fort Louis, about six miles off, at the entrance of the harbour, among the officers of the garrison. But had Sullivan been arrested his punishment no doubt would have been severe. Most certainly the French laws then in force, subjected him to twelve years' close imprisonment (if taken and tried) besides a heavy fine. Sullivan, therefore, having lived a long time among the French (having been born in Ireland) and knowing the punishment which awaited him, acted very wisely in making his escape, after first having satisfied his vengeance upon the head of the conqueror of Captain Parsons. And upon the whole every circumstance considered relative to this affair (as it was made public) very few of the people in L'Orient (and I like to have added, on board of his ship) were very sorry that Jones met with such a severe drubbing. And I am fully in the belief, in which I can venture to say I am not alone, that there was never any great search made for young Sullivan in and about the town by the officers of justice, nor by the guards—as he had many friends in this place, and Jones's popularity was at this time on the wane among

the French. However, the commandant and a few of the King's officers still remained friendly to him; but it was probable they were so merely on the score of having instructions from the King to conduct themselves friendly towards Captain Jones, and to render him every assistance which he asked of them, and which was in their power to give. It seems this was the general belief among the inhabitants of L'Orient at the time. Soon after the affair of Jones and Sullivan had a little subsided, the captain of marines caned him for ill usage in one of the streets of L'Orient, in the presence of a number of inhabitants.* This was such a disgrace to him, and hurt his feelings so much, that he went on shore but seldom after this affray, excepting at night. The ship *Ariel* being now nearly ready for sea, several of the petty officers importuned Captain Jones for a trifle of prize money, stating that they were not then in a situation to go in the ship, and to do their duty upon a winter's coast without a supply of winter cloaths, and that they could not procure them without cash. An indifferent† person would, I presume, view such a demand on the part of these officers, as perfectly reasonable and consistent with justice. For this, however, Captain Jones had several of them committed to prison in L'Orient for their (as he expressed it) impertinence.‡

About the tenth of December great preparations were made on board of our ship in consequence of a great number of people of the first character in L'Orient: one prince of the blood royal, and three French admirals, with some ladies of the first quality, having had cards of invitation sent them by Captain Jones inviting them on board of his ship the next day to take dinner with him precisely at 3 o'clock in the afternoon; and also informing the company that Cap-

* The ground of this quarrel originated from Jones having refused to accept a challenge which the captain of marines had sent him.

† Impartial.

‡ In MacKenzie's Life of Jones this affair is described—probably made up from Fanning.

tain Jones would, in the evening of that day, on board of his ship exhibit to them a sham sea fight; and that it should in part represent his battle with the *Serapis;* particularly her tops. To go through with a minute detail of all and every circumstance that related to this scene would, I fear, tire the patience of the reader; I shall therefore be as concise as possible in my relation of this exhibition.

First then, all the boats belonging to our ship were busily employed with their respective crews from the time the approaching scene was known on board (which was the day before it was to take place) at ten o'clock in the morning till about twelve at night of the day on which the company were to dine, in passing to, and coming from the shore, bringing off from thence all the articles wanted. And the reader may rest assured that neither cash nor pains were spared in order that the scene every way should appear magnificent. In a short time, our quarterdeck had the appearance of a lady of qualities' drawing-room. Overhead was suspended an elegant awning, the edgings of which were cut in scallops, and decorated with a variety of silk roses, tassils, &c. from a little below the awning: at the sides were hung thin canvass lined with pink coloured silk, and which fell down so as to reach the quarterdeck. These sides were hung with a great variety of French pictures and looking-glasses; some of the first had been drawn by one of the most finished artists in France, and many of which were quite indecent, especially to meet the eyes of a virtuous woman. However in these days they were a part of French etiquette on such an occasion. The quarterdeck of our ship was covered with the most elegant carpet: the plate alone which was made use of on this singular occasion was estimated to be worth two thousand guineas. (For my own part I believe it might have been rated at double that sum.) French cooks and waiters or servants were brought from the shore to assist

in this business, and for nearly twenty hours preceding the serving up of dinner, we were almost suffocated with garlick and onions, besides a great many other stinking vegetables. A French lady (who was said to be a great connosieur in the art of cookery, and in hanging and arranging pictures in a room where the first companies went to dine) was gallanted on board by Captain Jones the evening before the day on which the company were to dine, and was by him directed to take upon herself the superintendence of the approaching feast. The next day was ushered in by thirteen guns, and the dressing of the ship with the thirteen stripes, and the colours of all nations who were friendly to the United States. Captain Jones and his officers were all dressed in uniform, with their best bib and band on, and we were directed by Captain Jones to conduct ourselves with propriety and to pay implicit obedience to my *lady superintendent* of the ceremonies. At a quarter before 3 o'clock in the afternoon the ship's boats (three in number, each having a midshipman who acted for this time as coxswain, and the men who rowed the boats were all neatly dressed in blew broadcloth, with the American and French cockades in their hats) were despatched on shore to bring on board the company. Jones received them as they came up the ship's side, and conducted them to their seats on the quarterdeck with a great deal of ease, politeness and good nature.* Dinner was served up at half past 3 P.M. The company did not rise from table till a little after the sun set, when Captain Jones ordered his first lieutenant to cause all hands to be called to quarters which was done just as the moon was rising. I of course mounted into the main top, which had always been my station as long as I had served under Jones (of which and the men at quarters there, I had the command). Orders were given before we mounted

* The company was superbly dressed, and the prince was distinguished from the rest by a brilliant star which he wore upon his left breast.

into the tops that we must be well supplied with ammunition, blunderbusses, muskets, cowhorns, hand grenadoes, &c., the same as if we were now to engage with an enemy: and when the signal was given (which was to be a cannon fired upon the forecastle, and as soon as the gun was fired the sham fight was to commence). At 8 o'clock it began, and lasted about an hour and a quarter without any intermission. Such a cracking of great gun, swivels, small arms, cowhorns, blunderbusses, &c.; such a hissing and popping of hand grenadoes, stink pots, powder flasks, was now heard as they fell into the water alongside, as was never the like in the harbour of L'Orient, seen or heard. Some of the ladies were much frightened and the sham fight would have continued longer had it not been that some of them intreated Captain Jones to command the firing to cease. The fight over, a band of music, which had been ordered on board by the commandant, and who had been paraded upon the fore part of the quarterdeck, now played their part, and all was glee and harmony. At about twelve at night the company took their leave of Captain Jones, and the boats set them safe on shore, in the same order and regularity as they came on board, excepting a few who were landed *half seas over;* these the midshipmen assisted along to their lodgings, and returned on board to give an account to Captain Jones that we saw all the company safe at their respective places of abode. For several days after this, nothing of any note was to be heard in conversation among the French at L'Orient, in their coffee houses and private dwellings, but Captain Jones's feast and sham fight. Upon the whole, I believe it must have cost himself, as well as the United States, a vast sum of money. There was certainly a great quantity of powder burnt, and an abundance of wine (besides other liquors) drank. The cost of the whole of this entertainment, including the powder, amounted (by an estimate made by the American agent's first clerk, and who it seems paid the

cash for sundry bills relative to this business, to 3,027 crowns at 6s. 8d. each Massachusetts currency). Whether Captain Jones charged the whole or any part of the expense of this business to the United States I never learned.

An order at this time arrived from Paris, signed by the American ambassador resident at that place, directing Captain Jones to set the petty officers belonging to his ship, whom he had caused to be committed to prison, for asking him for prize money, at liberty, which was immediately done, and they were restored to their different stations on board the *Ariel*. The *Ariel* was now ready for sea, excepting that she wanted a number of seamen to complete her crew or complement of men. Captain Jones and his officers endeavored to ship men by keeping a rendezvous open on shore, but could not engage any. The former made this known to the commandant, and requested of him to give liberty to Captain Jones to press a few hands. The former would not absolutely give him permission, but told him he should not interfere, provided he pressed none but Americans. However it was said that the commanding officer of the marine department granted Jones's request on that score. Accordingly, a number of American sailors belonging to several letters of marque then laying in the harbour, and who were found on shore, were forced on board of the *Ariel* and there obliged to do duty. In fine, Captain Jones's conduct had been such for a long time past, that some of his officers and men were disgusted at it, and intended to leave him, and who before his last behavior in regard to the American seamen, were determined to go to America with him. I, for one, was among those who now quit him, and which I had an undoubted right so to do, never having signed the ship's articles, and having obtained of Captain Jones, a certificate for my prize money, &c. The *Ariel* set sail for America the second

time, on or about the 15th of December, 1780, having under convoy several American vessels.*

I remained in L'Orient some days after the *Ariel* sailed, every day of which I was at Mr. Moylan's to get my wages and prize money; and after several fruitless applications, I obtained twenty-eight crowns of him, in part for my wages on board the *Good Man Richard*, the *Serapis*, the *Alliance* and the *Ariel* which was but little more than enough to pay my board and lodging. I had by this time made a number of acquaintances in L'Orient, among them was a merchant by the name of Bellimont, who was interested in a privateer then fitting out at Morlaix; and he appeared to be anxious to have me proceed to that place and take upon me the command of her. However, I then declined accepting his offer, as I had an expectation of commanding one from L'Orient. * * * * * * *

*Out of the number which this ship had under her convoy for America, the first time she sailed from thence, only two were saved.

(Having frequently had occasion to introduce John Paul Jones to the notice of the reader, I presume it will not be unacceptable to present the following short sketch of the life and character of that enterprising, celebrated, and eccentric character.)

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE

LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

JOHN PAUL JONES, ESQ.

JOHN PAUL JONES was born at Selkirk, in Scotland, the seat of the Count of that name, on the 23d of September, 1747, as appeared from a written entry made in a book entitled 'The way to be happy in a miserable world' (an old family book) and which was among Captain Jones's books at the time he commanded the *Good Man Richard*, and was lost with her.* This account of his birth agreed with the words of his own mouth, which I have heard him mention to several gentlemen repeatedly, as to that event. It seems also by his own story, that he never went to any regular school in his life, but that an old maiden aunt, who lived in his father's family when he was very young, learned him his letters and to read a little. His name was then John Paul,† and that he had arrived at the age of twenty-two before he added that of Jones to it. This, it appears from some documents which I saw, was the surname of his mother before she was married to his father. The learning he obtained afterwards, from the age of nine years, was from close application to books, of which he was remarkably fond; and his studies as he says himself, day and night, were indefatigable. At

* Part of the time while I belonged to that ship I officiated as his secretary, in copying his dispatches to Congress, his letters, etc., at which time he allowed me to have free access to his books.

† This, it seems, was his father's name, who was the Count of Selkirk's gardener.

the age of nine years, he, without taking leave of his family, left the paternal abode and set out to seek his fortunes, with no other clothes than what he had on his back, and no money. Soon after this, he arrived at Leith (the very same place that he was on the point of laying under a heavy contribution as I have before related). Here he engaged on board of an English ship as cabin boy, which ship was in the coal trade, commonly called by the English *colliers*. This business he followed for a number of years. He was mate of a ship at 17 years of age, and a captain at 19. At the age of 24, he had the command of a large English ship employed between England and the West Indies. How many voyages he made in this trade I do not know; but this much appears to be true that during the last voyage which he made to the islands, his carpenter was drowned, and on the return of the ship which he commanded, at Hull, Capt. Jones was arrested and committed to gaol by the officers of justice, as the murderer of his carpenter, which was never proved upon him. But this much was sworn to by several of the ship's crew: that while the ship lay at anchor in the West Indies, the carpenter had been guilty of some misdemeanor, and that Jones undertook to have him punished in the following manner; he ordered an old broken pot to be placed upon the forecastle, and some powder was put into it; this done, he ordered the carpenter to set upon it with his naked breech, and then ordered the cook to set fire to the powder, the explosion of which frightened him in such a manner and perhaps hurt him a good deal too, so that he jumped overboard and was drowned. Jones however found means to make his escape from gaol and made the best of his way to the United States of America where he engaged on board of a continental ship of war in the capacity of a midshipman, either Hopkins or Whipple at that time commanded her, and he afterwards (with other vessels belonging to the United States) sailed on an expedition to New Providence. I

once noted in one of his letters to the President of Congress, which I was copying, that he boasted that with his own hands he hoisted the first American flag that ever floated over the stern of a vessel of war belonging to the United States.* * *

After Jones returned from New Providence with the American squadron, he was noticed by some of his superior officers, who procured him a commission and the command of a sloop of 12 guns in the service of the United States. After a cruise in this sloop was finished he was appointed and had a commission from Congress, to the command of a new ship of war called the *Ranger*, mounting 18 carriage guns (six pounders) and whose officers and crew consisted of one hundred and fifty-eight in all. With this ship and crew he sailed from the United States for the coast of England, and cruised there some time: during which, and when off or near Whitehaven, he sent his boats and a party of men, commanded by his first lieutenant, on shore for the purpose of (as he confessed a long time afterwards in his famous letter to the Countess of Selkirk) making her husband a prisoner, and of carrying him to France. The lieutenant who commanded this party landed without opposition, and they proceeded to the seat of the Count of Selkirk, but not finding the Count at home (he was as we heard some time after at London, being then a member of parliament) they plundered the house of all the silver plate and other valuable articles and retreated back to their boats, and arrived safe on board of their ship, and immediately made sail and stood from the land. When this transaction was known at Paris, it was disapproved by the French court, who remonstrated against the procedure to the American minister; in consequence of which, when the plate, &c., was landed at Brest, he ordered the whole to be sent back in a cartel ship then in that harbour. This order it seems was strictly adhered to.

But to return—the next news heard of the *Ranger*, was at a

time when she made her appearance off Waterford (or the Lough of Belfast) in Ireland. And while in sight of that port several fish boats came alongside, and the people belonging to one of them informed Captain Jones that there was an English ship of war lying in that port; that she was a king's ship, but they could not tell how many men she carried. Captain Jones thought, without doubt, this a good opportunity for him to try his *naval skill*, and the courage of the ship's company, who were nearly all full-blooded Yankees. Having this in view, he sent by one of these boats a written challenge to the captain of the sloop of war, called the *Drake* mounting 22 carriage guns of the same caliber as those on board of the *Ranger;* mentioning to the English captain the force of his ship, &c., and that he should like to meet him where he then was, and exchange a few broadsides with his majesty's ship the *Drake.* It is said this challenge was published in some of the English Gazettes; that it was well written, and contained very polite language, and yet was couched in *laconic terms.* The English ship was got ready as soon as possible; and besides her own complement of men, a number of Irish noblemen and others, embarked on board of her. When all was in readiness, the English ship spread her canvas, and proceeded out to meet the little *Yankee ship.* The inhabitants gave the English ship as she departed from the port three cheers, and wished the captain and his crew success. And I have little doubt but the prayers of thousands in and about Waterford accompanied these brave and dauntless English and Irishmen, that they might prove victorious over these daring rebels, who had dared to insult his majesty's liege subjects. The ships met and fought, and after about an hour and a quarter of severe conflict, the British ship yielded to the superior skill and bravery of the Americans, and down came the English flag.* When the two ships first met,

* This account of the action I copied from Captain Jones's journal, written with his own hand.

those that were on board of the *Ranger* declared the English ship appeared nearly twice as large as the former, and that she had almost double the number of men, the volunteers included. And they further declared, that the crew of the English ship during the action, made several unsuccessful attempts to board the American ship. That before the battle commenced Captain Jones took abundance of pains to instruct his top-men how to act. That he commanded his lieutenants who had the control of the great guns, to see that the guns were loaded with round, grape, and double-headed shot; and to be very particular to take good aim, and not to fire but one gun at a time; to be cool, deliberate, and not too hasty; and that with courage, steadiness and perseverance, they should, he made no doubt, give a good account of the English ship in a short time. On the contrary, the English ship was badly manoeuvered, fired her broadsides all at once, which occasioned her to heel very much from her antagonist, and by which means she received many of the American shot between wind and water, which occasioned her to leak badly; and in some measure, it is said, shortened the action; during which, her crew appeared to be in great confusion, and the slaughter among these last was dreadful. She lost in the action about one hundred and five men killed, and about seventy-two wounded. Whereas on board of the American ship there were but about one dozen killed, and nine wounded. The *Ranger*, with her prize, soon after got safe into France.

Some time after they had arrived Captain Jones had some misunderstanding with his lieutenants and quit the *Ranger*. And whether he was removed from this ship by orders of the American minister residing in Paris, which was said to be the case, or left her of his own accord, I do not pretend to know. It is certain, he was after this appointed to the command of the *Good Man Richard*, the next ship which he commanded after he quit the *Ranger*. The

reader has already seen how he behaved on board of this last mentioned ship in a few pages back.

It was while he was on board of this ship that he wrote his famous letter to the Countess of Selkirk, and which by his direction I copied. I have ever since been sorry that I had not at the time preserved a copy of it, so that I might have been enabled to insert it here. It appeared some time after he wrote it in several of the English Gazettes, and was said by some of them to be well written, and discovered the author to be a man of genius, and one who was tolerably well versed in the English language. The letter, certainly displayed abundance of wit and humor. Jones mentions in it, that his object in landing a party of men from the *Ranger* was to take the Count, her husband, make a prisoner of him, carry him to France, and there detain him until the British government would consent to a general exchange of American prisoners then detained as such in England. The Count at that time was very much esteemed by the English, and Captain Jones knowing this had no doubt but that if his project succeeded, the English ministry would be forced or drawn into it.

He disavows in this letter having any knowledge of her house being plundered and stript of plate, and other valuable articles by his party, until after he arrived in France some weeks after this transaction took place, and that the moment he became acquainted with it, he was one of the first to assent to its being carried back. He begged her ladyship's pardon for presuming to write to her, and also the trouble and pain the plundering of her house must have caused her, and that he hoped she would not lay anything of this pilfering business to his charge.

In this same letter he mentions, in severe terms, the wickedness of the British ministry in waging a cruel war against the people of the United States, and condemns them in the following lines:

'For they, 'twas they unsheathed the ruthless blade
'And Heaven shall mark the havoc it has made!'

There was abundance of poetry in the letter, but this is all I can remember. He closes with saying, he hoped the Countess, after what had happened would not withdraw her kind and friendly assistance, so long experienced, from his family, &c.

I shall mention next his gallantry with the American agent's wife, at L'Orient. I forbear here to mention the lady's name, for reasons which the reader may not care to hear. But, bye the bye, I must inform those who will take the trouble to peruse these pages that Captain Jones was a great lover of the ladies.

But to the fact, which was this: one afternoon the American agent came on board of his ship to do some business with the purser of the ship. In the interim Captain Jones gave his officers the hint, and told them to let no boat depart from the ship, nor any one come alongside during his absence, which was complied with. The agent began to be uneasy about 8 o'clock in the evening and requested of the officer who had the watch upon deck to put him on shore. But he replied that orders had been given to let no boat go on shore from the ship until Captain Jones came off. The agent at this could not contain his jealous rage for some time.

The truth is, he was a man of about sixty years of age very rude in his manners, I believe an Irishman by birth; and he was what people commonly call a homely man, but rich in the good things of this world. His present wife was only about seventeen years of age, very handsome, and a little given to coquetry. She was also vain, and fond of going to the play with almost any gentleman who would be so polite as to offer her a ticket. The agent had been for some time jealous of Jones as he had more than once surprised him with his wife in a very loving posture. The agent was detained on board

all night, and the Captain tarried the same time on shore with the lady in question. The officers on board of Jones's ship had plied the agent so well with wine, that he was quietly laid into a cabin in one of the state rooms as drunk as a beast. This piece of gallantry became soon after public in L'Orient.

At another time, Jones sailed on a short cruise, and carried off with him a married woman, who left behind two children and a French husband, who did not appear to regret the loss of his mate for a few weeks only.

The Captain, after he arrived, sent the lady on shore who, it is said and believed, carried to her husband a small purse from the Captain as a present to him to console him for her absence. * * *

Our gallant Captain, while on a visit in the city of Paris, some time after the victory gained by him over the captain of the *Serapis*, was invited to dine with the Count de Vergennes, then minister at the French court for foreign affairs. And after dinner the company, consisting of noblemen, and others of the first families of that city, the conversation turned upon the good conduct and bravery of our captain in the late battle between the *Good Man Richard* and the *Serapis*. One of the company observed to Captain Jones that his Britannic majesty had knighted Captain Parsons, and asked him whether he would ever dare to meet him again, now he was a knight. To which Jones made this laconic reply: 'If I should ever have the good luck to meet him again at sea, with a ship under my command of equal force to his, I will make a Lord of him.' This pleased the company mightily. After which not a day passed while he remained at Paris, but he received cards of invitation to dine or sup with the first characters in that city.

While at L'Orient one evening he had some business with a lady of pleasure; while the players at the theatre were performing, he retired the playhouse with the lady to a convenient place where

he left his watch.* A few moments after, one of his midshipmen having a similar affair with another lady retired together to the same spot. Here the midshipman picked up the captain's watch and shewed it to me—we both knew it. We then withdrew to the public parade near the playhouse, to consult what it was best to do with it. The result was, we agreed to carry it to a noted coffee house, where our captain was well known, and there pawn it to the master of the house, for one dozen bottles of the best old Bordeaux wine. On our way thither, we met with two of our brother officers, to whom we told what we had concluded to do, and they very readily agreed to join us.

Accordingly the watch was pawned for the wine and the reader may rest assured that we had a merry time of it, at our gallant captain's expense.†

This story when it became publicly known, occasioned a deal of diversion, both to the people in the town as well as on board of our ship. The captain paid the master of the coffee-house for the dozen of wine, and received his watch again, but I believe he never thereafter opened his lips to any person relative to the circumstances and manner of losing it. His crew, however, used to mention it sometimes, at the capstan bars when heaving the ship ahead.

The English were in the habit of saying that Captain Jones fought with a halter round his neck, in allusion to his having been imprisoned for murder, and that if he should fall into their hands, even as a prisoner of war, he would not be considered as such, but that he would be hanged immediately upon being taken. Also that Jones never did, nor never would fight, except he was nearly drunk. The English generally believing this to be the case with

* A gold one worth about thirty guineas.

† This is the only one of Fanning's scandalous stories which we reprint; and only because much more of the same, or worse sort, has appeared in the various biographies and notices of Jones' life.

him, called him a pot-valiant fellow. Such mean, grovelling, and dastardly means used in order to undermine a man's well earned popularity, I despise. Many such like sarcasms were uttered by the brave English against the great Washington.

About three years after the battle between the *Good Man Richard* and the *Serapis* I was in London and in one of the print shops in that city I saw Captain Jones's picture, and his name enrolled among the greatest pirates. In another print shop and at a coffee-house, in the same place, I saw what was said to be his likeness, nearly as large as life. He was represented with twelve pistols, six upon each side of him, secured in his girdle, and three men were represented before him in a kneeling posture. On the same picture one appeared to be shot dead, and falling at the feet of Jones, and he presenting a pistol in each hand to each of the other two. This alluded to the three men who cried out for quarters in the late battle, and who belonged to the ship *Good Man Richard*, as I have made mention of in the preceding pages.

As to the report of Jones's being pot-valiant, I declare that it is absolutely false. Having lived part of the time while I sailed with him in his cabin, I have a right to know, and shall here declare that I never knew him to drink any kind of ardent spirits; on the contrary, his constant drink was lemonade, lime juice and water, with a little sugar to make it the more palatable. It is true that every day while at sea and the weather good, he made it a custom to drink three glasses of wine, immediately after the tablecloth was removed.

On the passage from L'Orient to Philadelphia in the ship *Ariel*, somewhere not far from the Island of Bermuda he fell in with an English frigate of 32 guns, far superior in force to the ship he commanded. It was toward night when the Englishman came up with him, as Jones had made sail from her, knowing her to be an over-

match for his little ship. They hailed the American ship, and asked what ship it was and who commanded her. Captain Jones directed one of his officers to say that it was one of His Majesty's ships, known to Jones to be cruising on that station, naming one of her size and the captain's name, of one who he knew was then cruising in those latitudes, and a British man-of-war, as Jones at that time had a correct list of all the English ships of war, which were then cruising upon our coasts and in the West Indies. * * *[1]

Captain Jones was a man of about five feet six inches high, well shaped below his head and shoulders, rather round shouldered, with a visage fierce and warlike, and wore the appearance of great application to study, which he was fond of.

He was an excellent seaman, and knew, according to my judgment, naval tactics as well as almost any man of his age: but it must be allowed that his character was somewhat tinctured with bad qualities.

His behavior and conduct relative to the treatment of young Sullivan was condemnable in a high degree, but at the same time his courage and bravery as a naval commander cannot be doubted.

His smoothness of tongue, and flattery to seamen when he wanted them, was persuasive, and in which he excelled every other man I ever was acquainted with. In fact I have seen him walk to and fro upon the key in L'Orient, for hours together with a single seaman, in order to persuade him to sign the ship's articles which he commanded, and in which he often was successful. His pressing American seamen in that port was very unpopular, and on that score he was condemned by all of the Americans who were there at the time, except a few of his officers who executed his orders in this business. I am happy to say that I had no hand in this business. His pride and vanity while at Paris and Amsterdam, was not gener-

[1] Fanning here tells the story of the capture of the *Triumph* by the *Ariel;* but as MacKenzie's *Life* gives it at full length, and Fanning was not present, we omit it.

ally approved of after the famous sea battle. This certainly gave great umbrage to many persons who had been his best friends. His conduct however towards Captain Parsons, his antagonist, was highly approved of by many, and was becoming that of a conqueror. His enemies, the English, even applauded this action towards one of their nation, and who was at the time Jones's prisoner, and by the custom and rules of war, he had an undoubted right to have kept all the effects, which he ordered sent to Captain Parsons, while at the Texel, by the hands of Captain Cottenеau.

I shall mention one transaction more, and then close with the circumstances which took place near and at the time of his death. Which is as follows, taken from a verbal communication made to me some time after it happened, by an officer who was present:

While Jones was on his first cruise in the *Good Man Richard*, the *Alliance* frigate being in company, they fell foul of each other, in consequence of this the former carried away the mizzenmast of the latter, and the latter carried away the head of the former. There was a pretty heavy sea running at the same time and both ships were for some time in danger of going down. It seems the two commanders at the time were below, who blamed their officers who had command of the watch upon deck on board of both ships. The first lieutenant of Captain Jones who had the care of the watch then upon deck, and whose name was R. Robinson, was thought not to have done his duty, and of course was found fault with by Jones, who ordered him to be confined below. Soon after both ships arrived safe at L'Orient, where, by Captain Jones's direction, a court-martial (consisting of several American captains, whose vessels lay there at the time) was instituted to try Mr. R. The court sat on board the *Good Man Richard*, when after hearing the witnesses, and what could be said for and against Mr. R. they gave it as their unanimous opinion that he should be dismissed from the service.

This, when he heard of it, Jones absolutely refused to accept of. 'For, gentlemen,' said he, 'it was in my power to have dismissed him without calling you together'; alleging that it became his duty as commanding officer to insist upon their adding something more to their sentence, and, in fact, told them what it was, which was that of rendering him incapable of ever serving again in the Navy of the United States, in the character of an officer. And in conformity thereto, it was added to the sentence of the Court, and read to Mr. R. in the presence of the said court. And Robinson was sent on shore immediately after this was done, without money and destitute of friends, although he had at the time money due him for his services.

On or about the year 1792, Captain Jones headed a party of American gentlemen at Paris, and went to the place where the constituent assembly (at the head of whom was the French King) was sitting, to congratulate them in the name of all the Americans then residing in Paris, on their late glorious and happy revolution. Captain Jones, at the same time made a very handsome speech, which he addressed to the president of the assembly, who made a short but elegant reply.

This was the last public act, which I have any knowledge of, that he ever did. Very soon after, as the Paris gazettes inform me, he died in great poverty in the city of Paris.* Immediately on this news reaching the ears of the constituent assembly, one of the members rose and made a motion, that a committee of their body should be chosen for the express purpose of attending the funeral of the deceased. This was objected to on the part of some of the

*Notwithstanding Captain Jones was said to have died in poverty yet I believe at this day it is pretty generally known in this country that he left in the United States property to the amount of about 30,000 dollars, in new lands, and that there is no one who claims to be heir to this estate, except two maiden sisters who live in Scotland.

members present, on account of his not being a Roman Catholic. This objection did not prevail, and the motion was then put and carried without a division. The Committee were accordingly chosen, and attended the American Commodore's funeral.

It ought to have been mentioned in the foregoing biographical sketch of the life, &c. of Captain Jones, that after leaving the American naval service he was in the Russian naval service about eighteen months, and filled the station of Admiral. But through the intrigues and cabals of a number of English officers, then in the same service the whole of which had a tendency to lessen his merits, and finally was the means of procuring his dismissal from the Empress's service.

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF CAPTAIN PARSONS,*

Who commanded the Serapis, at the time of her engagement with the Bon Homme Richard; part of which was communicated to me by one of his officers, after the battle of the 22d of September, 1779.

CAPTAIN PARSONS was born of poor parents, in the county of Cornwall, in England, on or about the year 1729. He lived with them in quite an obscure manner until he was about fourteen years of age, when he took it into his head to elope from his parents, and set out for Portsmouth, where he fell in with some sailors, who persuaded him to go on board of an English ship of war. He had acquired some learning before he left his parents. His activity and sprightliness were soon noticed by his superiors, and he was some time after, when he had got some knowledge of seamanship, appointed captain of the mizzentop; from this to a forecastle man; and behaving himself remarkably well in the duties of his station, he was taken notice of by the Captain of the ship and promoted to the rank of midshipman. From this his promotion in the British navy became rapid, and in a few years thereafter, he was appointed and had a commission for a sloop of war, and during the war between the English and French sometime before the beginning of the American revolution, he achieved many acts of valour. I know nothing further of him until after the famous battle between him and Captain Jones. In this action every one who has read an ac-

*Fanning speaks of him always as "Parsons" though it would seem he must have known it was Pearson.—[Ed.]

count of it must allow that he did not lack of courage, and that his conduct while it lasted was such as would have done honour to the most experienced commander. His manner of conducting himself towards Captain Jones, however, must be allowed by impartial judges to be reprehensible in more than one instance. It showed something of the haughty spirit and pride of which we have many examples in the conduct of the British naval commanders, especially during the contest between Great Britain and the United States. It is well known that Captain Parsons was knighted by his King, and also that the merchants of Scarborough (where the greater part of the fleet which were under his convoy at the time Captain Jones fell in with him belonged) made him an elegant present of a service of silver plate, part of which represented that town in miniature, worth about 500 guineas. These were conferred upon him as a mark of gratitude and esteem, because they thought he had conducted himself with naval skill and bravery. To this, and to this only, must be attributed the salvation of the whole Baltic fleet under his care at the commencement of the battle.

A SHORT SKETCH OF THE CHARACTER OF RICHARD DALE, ESQ.*

John Paul Jones's first lieutenant, when he commanded the Good Man Richard, of forty guns, until she was lost; the Serapis, of fifty guns; the Alliance of thirty-six guns and the Ariel of twenty-four guns; ships of war in the service of the United States.

RICHARD DALE, ESQ., was born, if my memory serves me right, and according to what I have heard him say, in the state of Maryland. It seems when he was quite young that he took a liking to the sea, which has been his favorite element ever since. During the American Revolution he signalized himself in fighting the battles of his country, in consequence of which he added honor and glory to his own fame, and has deserved well of the country which gave him birth.

By his conduct, bravery, and perseverance, in the memorable battle fought between the *Good Man Richard* on board of which ship he was second in command, and the *Serapis* he acquired universal applause, and immortal glory. Since which time, while in the service of the navy of the United States, he has been conspicuous, and his merits and gallantry upon all occasions, entitles his name to be enrolled among the saviours of our common country.

While I sailed with him he was beloved by his brother officers, and the ship's crew. And to use a sailor's phrase, 'He was a clever,

* While I am copying off my old journal in order, or with a view some time or other of having it committed to the press, I rejoice to hear that this experienced officer has been appointed by our Executive, Commodore of the American Squadron in the Mediterranean. (This was in 1801.)

good natured sea officer'; and was always diligent in his duty, which gained him the applause of his superiors.

He was engaging in conversation, with all ranks of people, polite in his manners, and a good companion. He had none of that haughty, overbearing, domineering spirit about him, which is so frequently seen on board of English ships of war in officers of his rank towards their inferiors, especially the poor tars.

I shall now pursue the history of my Journal taking up the threads of it where I left off.

On the 20th December, having obtained several letters of recommendation, and some cash from French gentlemen with whom I had been in habits of intimacy and to whom I feel myself under infinite obligations, although this last was soon after remitted them, with my most grateful thanks for the use of the money, yet I thought that it behooved me here to make mention of it, so that those who take the trouble to peruse these pages might have a right idea of the generosity of the French nation (towards strangers) who are possessed generally of noble and generous minds whatever the English *Gazettes* inform us to the contrary notwithstanding * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * *
And now having been supplied with a passport, I set off by land for Morlaix, where I arrived safe on the 23d of December, and delivered my letters of recommendation to the persons to whom they were addressed, who appeared to be glad to see me, and immediately gave me the command of a lugsail privateer mounting 14 carriage guns* called the *Count de Guichen.*

This privateer was soon after got ready for sea, when the principal officers residing at the port, who were commissioned by the King, and who had the power of filling up all commissions of reprisal and letters of marque, declared that they had lately received

* Three pounders.

orders from the minister of marine, who resided at Paris, forbidding them from granting or delivering out any commissions to foreigners. In consequence of this the command of said privateer was given to a Captain Anthon,* a Frenchman, who at the time was a lieutenant in the French navy, but had obtained permission to command a privateer until further orders. He was very much of a gentleman, a good seaman, and a man of undoubted bravery. The most of our officers and crew, however, consisted of full blooded Yankees, or Bostonians, as the French then called all Americans, and of whom they were remarkably fond, amounting almost to adoration, particularly the French ladies. I was second captain of said privateer, and Captain Anthon indulged me pretty much with the whole command of the privateer during the cruise. And as he could not speak any English, I did nearly as I pleased in all things on board of her; such as making or taking in sail, chasing of vessels, disposing and commanding the crew in time of action, when to board an enemy, &c.

Morlaix is a very large town, situate between two remarkably high mountains, and upon each side of a narrow river which divides the town in two parts, and empties itself into the English Channel about five miles from the town, which lies in lat. 48.20—long. 40-10 W. from the meridian of London. Vessels of three hundred tons burthen may lay in perfect safety alongside of the keys—built of large square stone and cemented together in such a manner as to become one solid rock—without being exposed to any winds that blow. They lie for the most part aground, upon a hard gravelly bottom, and are left dry at low water. This is a very great convenience, especially for graving or scrubbing their bottoms. The entrance of the port is well defended by a strong castle, which is

* The French Admiralty has been unable to determine who this officer was; but he was probably Nicholas Anthon, of Morlaix, who was in the Navy in 1782.—[Ed.]

built upon a range of rocks that lie midway of the entrance. It has two tiers of heavy cannon, and in war times, its garrison consists of about sixty officers and men. * * *

On the 23d of March, 1781, we took our departure from Morlaix in the privateer which I have already given a description of. Two days afterwards we arrived off the Coast of Ireland. On the 27th, we took four prizes, which we ransomed, detaining a man as an hostage out of each. On the 27th at daybreak, saw several ships and other vessels in shore of us. It being then calm, the boat was ordered to be manned, on board of which I embarked and took an officer with me, all of us being well armed; and at 7 A.M. returned on board with ransom bills amounting to upwards of twelve hundred guineas, having secured five hostages for the payment of said sum. We returned on board before the captain (who had been upon deck the greater part of the preceding night) had awakened out of his sleep. He was very agreeably surprised when I told him of my enterprise, but blamed me for not acquainting him with my departure. At meridian being close under the land, we discovered a large ship in the offing, which we at first thought to be an English frigate, standing to the westward toward the port of Cork. She had an English ensign, pendant and jack flying with a cloud of sail spread. Soon after she was abreast of us, and we could distinguish by our spy glasses, that she had a tier of guns, and as she presented her broadside to us, we could count twelve guns upon this side.

We at length concluded that she was nothing more than an English letter of marque, and probably commanded by an English swaggering blustering fellow. Accordingly she passed us at some distance, and took no more notice of us than if we had been a small fishing boat. We made sail after her, and when we had got within a couple of miles of her, she rounded to, and gave us her broadside,

consisting of twelve cannon, as we then supposed, which were only half the number which she carried. This circumstance of firing at us at so great a distance, when none of her shot reached more than half way to us, indicated cowardice on the part of the English captain. This I noticed to Captain Anthon who coincided with me in opinion; and from that moment we considered the ship as our own. As we approached nearer to her, we could discover that she made quite a warlike appearance. We could soon after perceive a number of men with muskets upon her quarterdeck, and she appeared to be crowded with men. She continued to round to every few minutes, and fire her broadside at us. We now prepared everything in readiness for boarding her, knowing this method almost always to succeed, when we have to contend with an English man of war, or an English letter of marque; more especially when the strength of the enemy is superior in point of force. At length we got within cannon shot of the enemy, who hauled up their courses, handed their top gallant sails, and appeared to be making every disposition for a stout resistance. We now shewed who we were by setting a French ensign, and hoisting an American pendant. This last was to let the English know that they had to fight with Yankees. The drummer was sent up with his drum at the head of the foremast where supporting himself with one foot upon the rattline of the fore-shrouds, and the other upon the fore yard, the wind blowing about a four-knot breeze; when we had got near enough for them to hear, the drummer and fifer were directed to play Yankee Doodle, which was continued during the action.

By this time the ship had fired a number of broadsides at us, without doing us any injury. We at length came within pistol shot of her, ran under her stern, and poured our broadside into her, which raked her fore and aft and which made a confounded racket in the cabin among the crockery; and some women who were

passengers on board, and were in the cabin at the time, made a dreadful screaching and crying out. This single broadside drove all the English off the quarterdeck, upon the main deck. We now made an attempt to board the enemy but the privateer having so quick headway we shot by her without being able to succeed in boarding her. We passed across her fore foot, wore, and gave her another broadside. At the same time one of the enemy's shot cut away our jib haulyards, and the slings of our fore-yard, and down it came upon deck and the drummer with it. The enemy seeing this, cheered three times; and after firing her broadsides and musketry into us, they made all the sail which they could crowd from us. But we had no idea of losing her in this manner. We soon got everything which had been cut away in repair, and gave her chase; the wind then began to die, and we gained upon her very fast. When the enemy saw this, they again took in their light sails, hauled up their courses, and made every disposition which they thought proper for renewing the action. Being ourselves now prepared with two broadsides and men ready for boarding; I then went forward, they being within hail and commanded them to haul their colours down, if they wished for quarters, to which they made no answer. I then desired Captain Anthon to order the privateer to be run under the enemy's stern, when we would give her another broadside; immediately after which I was ready with the party I commanded to board her. Accordingly we ran under her stern, fired our cannon into her cabin windows, luffed up under her lee, and layed her aboard. At the same instant the enemy bawled out for quarters and dowsed the British flag.

The action lasted about one hour, and some part of it was very severe. She proved to be an English letter of marque, four hundred tons burthen, carrying twelve long six pounders, two short carronades (which would carry eighteen pound shot), ten cowhorns,

twelve brass swivels, and fifty-five men, and twenty-six gentlemen passengers, besides seven English ladies. She was from Bristol, bound to the West Indies, laden principally with dry goods.

The invoice of her cargo amounted to thirty thousand pounds sterling.

I leaped on board of her at the time she struck, and asked for the captain, who came forward and delivered me his sword; a major and a captain also delivered me their swords. These last were bound to the West Indies to join the regiment to which they belonged. The ladies also crowded around me, and offered me their purses, which I refused to accept of.

One of them was wringing her hands, and lamenting the loss of her husband, who had been killed in the first of the action by one of our cannon shot which passed through his body. The other gentlemen passengers kept crowding round me, and teazing me with their outcries:—that I had killed one of his majesty's colonels. Which drew from me this reply 'Blast his majesty's colonels, I wish they were all dead, and his majesty too.' I was sorry for this expression, I must confess, as soon as it had escaped my lips—it was uncharitable, and unchristianlike. However I was busy at the time, in securing the prisoners, and sending them on board the privateer, and in doing what I considered to be my duty, and was therefore, perhaps on that account the more excusable.

I certainly felt sorry on the lady's account whose husband was killed, and to her I made an apology for the harshness of the expression; but I did not feel myself bound to apologise to anyone else, on the most rigid principles of honour or good breeding.

It must be acknowledged, that this ship so well provided as she was, with all kinds of warlike stores, and having at the time, more and heavier guns than what we had on board of our privateer ought to have taken us, and afterwards hoisted her in upon deck.

However, "the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong."

The ship lost in the action, one lieutenant colonel, one master's mate, one boatswain's mate, four seamen and one boy killed, and eleven men and boys wounded. On board of our privateer not a man was killed, and only five were slightly wounded.

I wished to continue in the prize but Captain Anthon would not consent to it. All the officers as well passengers, as those who belonged to the ship, and her men, except three, and one of the master's mates were taken out of the prize, and sent on board of the privateer. The ladies were left on board the ship with their servants, by their particular request.

We then put a prize master on board, with thirteen able seamen and he was ordered to shape his course and make all possible speed for Brest or Morlaix; and that the privateer should, if in our power keep her company until we arrived safe at one of those ports.

We accordingly kept with the valuable prize until in sight of Ushant, near the entrance of Brest, when there sprung up a violent gale of wind from the N.E. which separated us from our prize (and we afterwards heard that she was taken by the English) and after having sprung a leak, we were forced to heave overboard all our guns but four, and in two days thereafter we arrived in the port of Brest in distress, and she leaked so bad at the time that we were obliged to lay her ashore on our arrival in order to have her leak stopped and her bottom cleaned.

The port of Brest is one of the best seaports for ships of war in the known world. It lies upon the Atlantic Ocean, on the starboard hand of the British Channel, and is in lat. 48.25 N. and in long. 5.0 W. from the meridian of London. The Land's End of England bears north a little westerly from it. Ships of the line, fifty's, forty-four's, frigates, and sloops of war, all lie at their re-

spective moorings in the harbour, in about seven fathoms of water, when the tide is at its lowest ebb, and perfectly secure from any wind that blows; as the harbour is surrounded with land the most of which is very high, especially at the entrance where it is very strongly fortified. Each ship of war has her particular magazine or store, which is numbered, and her name affixed upon the door in capital letters; where when the ship is laid up in dock, or refitting, her sails rigging, &c., are deposited; and when they have occasion for rigging sails, or anything requisite to the fitting out of any one of these ships of war, they have only to repair to the magazine of such ship or ships, where they are sure to find a fresh supply of any article needed. This, it must be acknowledged, is a very great convenience; and I believe, such an one as the English cannot boast of.

As I had leisure time while I was here, I went to see the slaves, who are confined in this place; and who are employed by the government, in the docks, and in different parts of the town, and the place where they are confined, which is an amazing strong one. They have a great number of rooms, where they are all chained at night, fifty or sixty in a group together, to a huge chain, leading to an enormous ring-bolt affixed in the centre of each room. They have a little straw to lie upon, and are arranged feet to feet, and form a circle round the ring-bolt. And at the door of each room, which is as strong as wood and iron, assisted by art, can make it; there is mounted a cannon, loaded with round and grape shot, ready primed; by the side of which is placed a lighted match, in a match tub; and upon the least noise of the slaves, the sentinel's orders are to fire this cannon in amongst them (which I was told happened sometimes); as there are many of them who choose rather to die a sudden death at the mouth of the cannon, than to continue in this state of slavery and wretchedness any longer. So that they often

raised a noise on purpose that they may provoke their inhuman tormentors to send them into another world.

There are among them men who have been rich; merchants whose only crime has been that of carrying on an illicit trade to and from different parts of the kingdom, for which they were condemned to be galley slaves a very considerable part of their lives; many of whom have large and very respectable families. But these last are often pointed at by the unthinking multitude, with the finger of scorn. And for what; because, forsooth, the heads of these distressed families are slaves. Alas, poor human nature! My pen is ready to drop from my hand, while I relate such barbarous facts of a nation, who call themselves civilized. The aborigines of the wilds of America, would have shuddered, blushed, and stood amazed, at such transactions as these; who certainly were guilty of crimes that admit of no excuse. I beg the reader's pardon for this digression; I could no more refrain from it, than I could turn away from a poor ragged beggar with disdain, when asked by him for something to buy him a piece of bread, when famishing with hunger. Some of these merchants are sentenced for three, some for four, and some for six years, according to the nature of their crimes. Some of the last are allowed, and do frequently afford themselves silver chains, and which I have seen them wear. But notwithstanding this, they are obliged to work as hard, and submit their backs to the sting of the whip during their servitude, as those who are condemned for murder, robbery, &c. Those guilty of these crimes are for the most part slaves for life. The greater number of them, as I was informed (in this port) by one of the officers of the admiralty, exceeds six thousand. The chains that each one is obliged to wear, or drag about with him while on duty (the merchants, who wear silver ones, excepted); although they are chained together two by two, weigh about forty-five English pounds per head, and double *that* to

two of these, are fixed to their legs; but when they are at work, they are permitted to attach the loose part of their respective chains round their waists, and with a piece of rope-garter, &c., to facilitate their labour. There are four overseers, or drivers, to every hundred of them, who carry each a long tough whip, and which are often in motion; with these they shew but little mercy to the poor wretches. They are whipped so unmercifully sometimes, that they have scarcely the breath of life left in them. They are dressed in coarse red clothes, with leather caps upon their heads, on the front of which are affixed pieces of tin or brass, on which are engraved in capital letters, their respective crimes for which they were condemned; but they often deny that they have been guilty of any, when they are asked by strangers. The Count D'Artois, one of the princes of the blood royal, was not long since here, his Christian majesty's brother; and had a desire to see the slaves; to several of whom he gave money, and asked them severally, what were their crimes; who answered that they had been guilty of none. He observed that one of them looked more sad than his fellows, and did not incline to say anything. The prince then entered into conversation with him. 'And what crime have you committed,' said the prince. "Come, be ingenuous, and tell the truth, my lad," continued he. "Why," replied the slave, after a short pause, "my crime, for which I am doomed to wear these chains, and to drag out a miserable existence (pardon me, my good prince) is of the blackest kind: and it makes me shudder to reflect upon it. About six years ago, my unnatural parents (God forgive them) who are still very wealthy, forced me to marry a young woman whom I had conceived a great aversion to; and who (for what reason I cannot tell) I hated with the most bitter hatred, insomuch that I murdered her on the same night in which the priest joined us together in wedlock; for which I am condemned to wear these galling chains." The prince

was convinced that this miserable wretch spoke the truth, for it was engraven on his forehead (which was also the case with the other slaves whom he had questioned, although they had denied it), and appeared to be much affected with the poor slave's confession, and in a short time thereafter procured him his liberty.

There are in this port some of the most convenient dry docks for ships of war that I ever saw, and perhaps in the known world. Likewise a very curious machine for hoisting in and out first-rate men of war's lower masts (as well as smaller vessels). It is done with so much expedition that I have seen them strike out a seventy-four's lower masts which had been sprung or damaged, and replace them with new ones in the space of sixty-four minutes; as I was particular enough to look at my watch when they began, and when they had finished; for this reason, I assert it as a fact. The slaves are employed in this kind of business, in the arsenals, and ship-yards.

While I was at Brest, the *Coronne** of eighty guns, almost a new ship, newly sheathed with copper, having just hauled out of one of the dry docks, and lying alongside of the Key (or Quay), took fire, and was consumed to the water's edge, in spite of the exertions of several thousands of people to extinguish it. Happily for the inhabitants of the town that she had no powder on board, and that no lives were lost. A new ship of the same name, mould, &c., was soon after ordered by the minister of marine to be built with the greatest dispatch possible. And I have since been informed by credible persons, that in seven weeks counting from the time the keel was laid, she was ready to sail with the fleet, having all her guns, provisions, &c., on board. And what induced me to believe this was a fact is, that it has since been mentioned upon the floor of the house of commons in England, by one of the members of parliament, in order probably to shew how much greater exertions in

*Couronne.—[Ed.]

such business the French were capable of than the English, who boast so much of their expedition in building, fitting out, and commanding their navy.

On the 7th of April, our privateer being refitted and ready for another cruise, we put to sea, and shaped our course for the coast of Ireland, where we arrived on the 10th following; and on the 12th we took two prizes. We cruised off or in sight of the highlands of Dungarvan till the 30th, without capturing any other vessels, the wind during that time being to the westward; but on this day at the setting of the sun the wind shifted to the eastward, which we considered as a favourable omen, as this wind was fair to waft some rich English ships from Bristol or Liverpool, along the Irish coasts. On the next day we took three small English sloops, two of which we ransomed, and the other we sunk, after having taken out the crew.

At 7 A.M. we discovered several square-rigged vessels, and by 2 P.M. we had eleven sail brought to; at 5 P.M. we had got through with ransoming all of them, and we took hostages out of each for the better security of the ransom bills. At 6 P.M. saw two lofty ships to the windward with a crowd of sail set standing before the wind directly before us. All hands were now called to quarters and we lay to for them till 8 o'clock at night, when they came within hail of us. The foremost and the largest ship hailed us, and as soon as she knew us to be an enemy she gave us a gun. But the captain of the privateer thought it advisable to run from them. When I told him that if these two were English cruisers we were too near them to get away, and if they were merchantmen we should stand a chance of capturing them both. Accordingly, orders were given to fire a broadside into the largest (the other being also at this time within gun shot), which was executed, and she settled down her topsails instantly and begged for quarters, hove to, and struck her flag. We then gave the small ship the other broadside, and she

followed the example of her consort. The boat was now manned, and I was sent to take possession of these prizes, and to send the captains, with their papers, on board of the privateer. When I arrived on board of the largest I found that she was pierced for eighteen guns, but carrying at the time only eight carriage guns, and ten wooden (or Quaker) guns, manned with twenty-five officers, men and boys, burthen about three hundred tons, bound from Bristol to Cork. I dispatched the capt. of her on board of the privateer. It was now pretty dark. But I had not been on board of this ship to exceed fifteen minutes, before I saw a strange sail bearing directly down upon us, and by her manoeuvering I had reason to believe her an enemy. The handful of men which came on board with me I placed to the ship's guns, and made other preparations for engaging (not being at this time within hail of the privateer). The prisoners I also secured below. She boldly ran under our stern and hailed (I could now just discern the privateer's lights). The master of which, in a bold and resolute manner demanded "from whence we came, and where bound." In answer, I ordered him to go on board of the privateer, where, when he arrived he would probably be acquainted with, where we were from, and where bound. When he heard this he swore at a dreadful rate, and almost stove his speaking trumpet to pieces across the quarter rail. Arriving on board of the privateer (our bold captain who commanded the brig I had just brought to) asked for the captain of the privateer; when one of the lieutenants who spoke English, introduced him to Captain Anthon; who immediately asked him who he was. Who replied, 'Sir, I was master of the brig which the ship obliged me to bring to, the captain of which ordered me on board of this lugger.' 'Very well,' replied Captain Anthon, 'I will attend to your business when I have done with these other two captains (meaning the masters of the ships). The poor captain of the brig not rightly understanding what all this

meant, spoke again to Captain Anthon, and said, 'Sir, I hope you are an Englishman, and this is an English privateer; for I certainly took the ship which brought me to, to be an English letter of marque.' 'She is so,' replied Captain Anthon (in broken English), 'but notwithstanding, she is my prize, and so is your brig; but it is the fortune of war, and therefore make yourself easy.' In fine, we ransomed the two ships, having first thrown overboard their guns, powder, &c., out of them (according to custom), for three thousand two hundred guineas; and the brig and cargo for five hundred. However, these two sums were not more than half the value of these vessels; but we thought it more prudent to ransom them for this sum than to run the risque of sending them to France. After this we shaped our course for Morlaix, having now on board ransom bills to the amount of ten thousand, four hundred and fifty guineas, besides eleven men as hostages, till that sum was paid. On our way thither we fell in with an English frigate called the *Aurora*, of twenty-eight guns, between Scilly and the Land's End; which after a chase of sixteen hours, part of which time it blew very fresh, and she out carried us, she captured us and carried us into Monts* Bay, which lies a little distance easterly from the Land's End, and where there is a small town called Penzance, about forty miles W.S.W. of Falmouth.

The captain of the *Aurora*, a Scotchman whose name was Collins, treated us exceedingly handsome, as he did not suffer any of his crew to take the least thing from any of us. Captain Anthon even saved his spy-glasses, quadrant, maps, &c., belonging to the privateer.

It was on the night of the 4th of May that we were thus captured, and on the day our hostages having been released, we were all searched for ransom bills. (Captain Anthon having before de-

*Mount's.—[Ed].)

livered to Captain Collins two parcels for genuine ones; but they were such as we had filled up during the chase, for the express purpose of retaining those which were original. These last he concealed in his breeches, by which means they were saved, as will appear in the sequel. We went through another search without any better success on their part than at first.) The genuine ransom bills were afterwards sent to France by a safe conveyance.

It seems that during the last war there was an additional clause affixed to each ransom bill, which specified that the master of every vessel, after having been ransomed by an enemy, bound himself, his heirs, executors, and assigns, to pay the sum mentioned in the ransom bill or bills, in case the privateer should be taken, and the hostages released; provided, that the owners of such privateer could get the ransom bill or bills into his or their possession, to be afterwards produced in England for the final recovery of such sum or sums of money; and that the holders of said bills should *bona fide* be paid. This was the cause of our being so very strictly searched, and was the reason, or at least one among many more, why the British parliament passed a law not long since, purporting that no master or commander of an English vessel should on no pretence whatever ransom his vessel, &c.

On the 7th of May the captain of the *Aurora* ordered all of us but our first lieutenant, pilot, and boatswain (who were all three soon after tried and hanged, they having been in the English service previous thereto, and were known by some of the ship's crew which captured us). I say, all the rest of our privateer's crew were ordered to get ready to go on shore, which we did. And as Captain Anthon and myself were ready, and waiting to embark on board of the boats then lying alongside; the captain of the frigate, with his own hands, and in a very polite manner, handed us our side arms. Saying, as he presented me mine, "Sir, you are welcome to it, but I hope

you never will unsheath it again in anger against those who ever have esteemed the Americans as Englishmen." We afterwards landed, and the principal officer here under the king, invited Captain Anthon and myself to his house, where we were entertained by himself and family with hospitality and politeness. The next day we were allowed to furnish ourselves with a post chaise, and the king's officer furnished us with passports, and directed us to proceed with all convenient speed to Falmouth; and when we arrived there, he told us to call upon the mayor of that place who he said would parole us.

We accordingly set off in the post chaise without a single person to guard us, and we might, had we been so minded, travelled on so far as London. We had however pledged our words to the king's officer that we would go direct to Falmouth. On our way thither we passed through the town of Helston,* where we saw several French officers paroled in the town, some of whom we had been acquainted with in France. We arrived in the evening at Falmouth, when we called upon the mayor, who treated us with politeness. We had not been long at his house, before the English commissary for prisoners of war came into the room where we were, when we were introduced to him by the mayor who stated our case to him; but as soon as he cast his eyes the second time upon Captain Anthon, he knew him, and accused him of breaking his parole at Helston, some months previous to the time I am now speaking of, and which appeared to be true. This being the case with Captain Anthon, he was refused to be paroled. The commissary then turned to me and asked me if it was my wish to have my parole. I replied, 'that if my captain went to prison, I should certainly think it my duty to accompany him, and this was my choice.' He after paying me a compliment on account of my attachment to Capt.

*In Hampshire.

Anthon, told me I should be indulged in my choice. A guard was now called and escorted us to prison the same night, which was about two miles from Falmouth. The very dirtiest and the most loathsome building I ever saw. Besides, we had no sooner heard the prison doors closed upon us than we were attacked on all sides with swarms of lice, remarkably fat and full grown; bedbugs and fleas. I believe the former were of Dutch extraction, as there were confined here at this time a number of Dutch prisoners of war; and such a company of dirty fellows I never saw before nor since. The first night I did not close my eyes, although fatigued; and I must confess I began to repent my not accepting of my parole when it was offered me. On the dawn of the next morning, I waited with no small anxiety for the prison doors to be opened, which however was not done until the sun arose. I now got out of reach of my nightly tormentors by walking out in the yard adjoining the prison. In the course of the day some of the prisoners were so generous as to cede to Captain Anthon and myself one corner of the prison which they had occupied and which we got cleansed. We then screened, with some sheets, our little apartment; and having provided ourselves with a large swinging cot, wide enough for both to sleep in it. This arrangement enabled us to live somewhat more comfortable, and to keep out of the way in some measure of the vermin.

On the 15th the commissary sent orders to the gaoler, for Captain Anthon and myself to be permitted to walk without the prison yard every day at the rising of the sun, provided that we would promise to return at sunset, and be confined within the prison walls every night; and provided we would engage not to go farther from the place of confinement than one mile and an half; to which we readily agreed with infinite pleasure. According to this agreement we had our liberty granted us every morning at sunrise, and returned to the prison every evening at sunset, and we slept within

the prison walls at night, observing strictly never to tarry out longer than the appointed time.

There were a great number of farm houses within our limits, to which we used to resort, the inhabitants of which treated us with hospitality and kindness; and where I spent many agreeable hours with the Cornish girls* who are generally tolerably handsome and good company; but at the same time they are very ignorant, and credulous sometimes.

We went to the exhibition of cockfighting; a place called a cockpit, made on purpose, was within our limits. At this diversion I have frequently seen the mayor of Falmouth, magistrates, merchants, ladies of distinction, and almost all grades of people. The cockfight is generally announced in public advertisements, when and where to be exhibited. At one of these (notwithstanding against the laws of the country) I have seen great crowds of people. They make large bets upon the cocks which are to fight as soon as they are gafted, and brought into the pit. At the last exhibition of this kind that I went to see I believe there were at least two thousand men, women and children; when I saw the sum of two hundred guineas staked on the head of a cock, but their common bets are from one to twelve guineas each, upon a single battle. This kind of diversion (though a barbarous one in my opinion) lasts a day; during which time there are a great many cocks slain in the *field* of battle, besides broken heads among the men.

After having tarried here about six weeks, we were exchanged, and arrived in Cherbourg in France, the latter end of June, from whence all of us who came over in the cartel, to the number of one hundred and twenty-five, including several Americans, were conducted under a strong guard through the country to Brest, in order to help man the grand French fleet of war, then lying at that place.

* It was in the county of Cornwall where we were prisoners.

(From Cherbourg to Brest is about two hundred and sixty English miles.) Upon the road I was plundered of the greater part of my wearing apparel, for which I never obtained any redress, neither did I know who did it; I however suspected the guard who accompanied us. We were ten days upon our march, but no more than about seventy out of the whole number of those who had been exchanged reached Brest at the expiration of that time; the rest deserted on the road. Arriving at Brest, I applied to the French commissary (with whom I had previously formed an acquaintance) for a passport to go to Morlaix. He condescended to grant me one, and at the same time told me that if I had arrived before the grand fleet had sailed, I should have had the honour of serving his most Christian Majesty in the navy at least one campaign.

Soon after this, I set out from Brest for Morlaix, where I arrived in a few hours, and where I found a French brigantine letter of marque ready to sail for the West Indies, on board of which I engaged a passage, and room for some freight. I made a partial settlement with my owners, and obtained of them some wines, and a quantity of dry-goods, which I shipped on board of said vessel. I received also of them five thousand livres Tournois* in cash. I embarked on board of said vessel with my *little all* in high spirits, hoping once more to see my native country. Having taken leave of all my friends, we set sail for our port of destination on the 12th of July, 1781, with a favourable wind.

The brig on board of which I had embarked was cutter built, and consequently a prime sailer. She mounted 16 guns, and carried 41 officers, men, and boys, besides seven men passengers. On the 14th, about 5 leagues N.W. of Ushant, we were chased by an English frigate four or five hours, but night came on and we lost sight of her. The same night we experienced a violent gale of wind which forced

*A livre Tournois is about 19½ cents.

us ashore a few leagues to the westward of the Isle of Bass,* no great distance from Morlaix. Here the brigantine and cargo were totally lost. And it was not without the greatest hazard and difficulty that we all got safe on land. By this sad and lamentable shipwreck, I had lost every farthing of money and property which I possessed or owned in the world, and which reduced me once more to beggary. After I got safe on shore, I could not help reflecting on my past misfortunes, which it seemed to me were never to end. However, I soon recovered from such visionary ideas; I grew calm, and I came to this determination, never to attempt again to cross the vast Atlantic Ocean until the god of war had ceased to waste human blood in the western world. I considered that it made but a little difference whether I fought under the French or American flag, as long as I fought against the English; and besides, the French at the time were our allies and best friends.

I therefore once more set out for Morlaix, where I arrived on the 17th, and was very kindly received by the ladies and gentlemen of my acquaintance. I had by this time made some progress in the French tongue, and could converse a little with the ladies, who always seemed to be very anxious to instruct me, and to put me right when I made any blunders, or pronounced an indecent word, which often happens to a new beginner, who has but a small smattering of their language. I had now some leisure hours to visit the public amusements and diversions in this place * * * *

The latter end of August I set our for Dunkirk, which is about six hundred miles between the north and the east from Morlaix, with an intention of going another cruise with my old friend Captain Anthon, in a large cutter of eighteen guns, the command of which had been conferred on him. The first day (having a good horse) I arrived at Dinan, a very considerable inland town, lying on the

* Isle de Bas.—[Ed.]

eastern boundary of the province of Brittany, situate upon an eminence, a noted place for the confinement of English prisoners of war. The town is pretty large, and it is defended on all sides by a prodigious strong castle large enough, it is said, to contain ten thousand men. The town is walled in, within which there were confined at this time, four thousand English prisoners of war. The next day I entered, and travelled on in the province of Normandy. said to be the largest and best province in France. I passed through a great many towns and villages, part of which were walled in, and arrived at the city of Caen, the capital of this province, a handsome built flourishing place. In my travelling along through the small towns and villages,* I found most of the houses only one-story high, without any floor but the naked ground, and the people who dwelt in them without anything better to sleep upon than straw, and even in this their cattle partook a share with them.

The public roads in this country swarm with beggars; and whenever a carriage passes or men on horseback, men, women, and children, all in rags, will be seen running and hallooing after those who pass for charity. I have often thrown a handful of sous among them to prevent them from following me any farther, and while they were scrambling after these I would steal a march upon them, and get out of their sight, but it was not long before I would meet others of the same description, and their importunities would be so incessant and so moving, that I could not get rid of them until I had thrown some more change in among them. A great many of these beggars live upon each side of the public roads, in caves made or dug out of the earth, and covered over with the same, each of these generally contain a little family; they do not appear to have any household utensils; and nothing to lie on but straw. They are

* These towns and villages are mostly built with stone, and are very low. I have frequently seen in one of these houses a family of men, women, and children; cow, horse, goat, sow and pigs; all huddled together in a single room without any floor.

for the most part very dirty. At the door of each hut or cave, one of the family keeps a look out, and whenever they hear or see any carriages, people on horseback or otherwise passing, the beggar on duty or watch gives the rest the alarm. In a moment the road will be nearly filled with them. And night or day, it is morally impossible to pass without giving them some money; and even if you throw them any there will be some among them who have not got a share of it, and who will follow after you as fast as their legs will carry them for several miles together; and the boys will run almost as fast as the fleetest horse upon these occasions. I remember one instance on the road which I was travelling at the time on horseback, in company with a gentleman between Paris and Dunkirk, that we overtook three of these beggar boys, who had at that instant crept out of their den; neither of us had any change, accordingly we agreed as soon as they began to beg charity of us, to clap spurs to our horses and leave them. These boys appeared to be from eleven to fourteen years of age; they had not then upon them anything but a few rags, not sufficient to cover their nakedness without any hats, and their hair appeared as though a comb had never touched it. We accordingly set off upon a full gallop, and they after us close to our horses' heels, until we had rode about ten miles, when the youngest boy began to fall astern. The other two still held out and kept as near us as they were when they first started with us. At length I was tired myself in riding so fast, being mounted upon a hard going horse, and I spoke to the gentleman in company with me to halt, which we both did. I then gave the largest boy a crown, and bade him divide it equally between the three, whom I now found to be brothers, by enquiring of the largest boy, and that they dwelt together in one cave, where they had left their father and mother when they came in pursuit of us. The beggar boys now appeared to be satisfied, and we pursued our journey.

My reflections now led me to consider from what source originate such multitudes of beggars in France, and after weighing the subject every way maturely, I concluded it must be owing to the government under which they lived, being at this time swayed by a king, with his swarms of nobles, farmers general,* and other royal leeches, who are continually preying upon and devouring the hard earnings of the people.

O my country! how happy a lot has Providence placed her in. Thank God, there are no royal leeches there, and I sincerely pray to him that we may never have any; nor any of those beggarly outcasts of society, of whom I have attempted to give the reader a faint description. No, my countrymen, remember this (nor does it require the spirit of prophecy to predict), that whenever the first class, to wit, nobles, and royal leeches, are established in the United States, beggary, with all its horrors and torments, will be the unhappy portion of the greater part of those citizens and their families, who are now considered as good livers, but according to some the lower class of people in that happy country. May God of his infinite mercy avert such a judgment, should be the hearty prayer of every good citizen of the United States.

This I believe to be a fact, that those whom we call poor people in America, know nothing, absolutely nothing of poverty, such as the beggars in France experience. Any traveller must have a heart harder than adamant who can refuse to give them a small pittance of such riches as Providence has placed in his hands. To see hundreds of aged, halt and maimed, of our fellow creatures begging for charity, would, methinks melt, if possible, the heart of a stone. To see them crawling out of their caves like four footed

* The great collectors of the royal taxes, with whom the government was in the habit of contracting for large sums of money, and which they used to advance to the government, and then tax the people as they pleased, without being accountable to any one, even if the people were oppressed ever so much.

beasts, and cry charity. (Mon cher Monsieur, je prie au bon Dieu pour vous) my dear Sir, I will pray to God for you. The little naked children, fifty, and sometimes seventy in a drove, running and following after people in carriages, on horseback, &c., for miles, making a most hideous noise, would move the most obdurate heart to pity them in such a manner as to induce a few pence to be given to these real objects of charity.

But to return; the city of Caen is a very large populous one; very handsomely built, and in my opinion but little inferior to the city of Paris, for beauty and magnificence. It is true, there are here no palaces, but the buildings in general are more elegant, the streets much handsomer, and the city is more pleasantly situated in many respects. It lies about nine miles south of the English channel, in lat. 49.10 N. West, long. 30 minutes. The taxes in this place are enormously high, as well as in other parts of Normandy, occasioned, as I was informed, by a rebellion which took place in the province a great many years ago. They are obliged to pay the king a higher duty on wine than it costs them when they purchase it; and there is but a small chance of introducing this or any other article here without paying the duties even in the way of smuggling them. They are obliged to buy salt for their own consumption at a very high rate of the officers of the crown (who are monopolizers of it) and on which there is a duty of three sous per quart, and every family are obliged to buy so much annually, whether they want it or not, according to the respective number which each family consists of. If any one is detected in having a quantity of salt water in his or her house, which can be proved to have been taken out of the sea, the person in whose custody it is found is liable to pay a fine of twenty-five guineas to the king. Should the person after conviction not be liable to pay that sum, he or she is imprisoned for one year, unless a bondsman is procured to be answerable for said

fine in a reasonable time, to be approved of by the king's officers. Upon the whole, there is nothing in this province but what is taxed either by the crown, the nobles (who have large estates in the province) or the royal leeches. I was told by an English gentleman residing there, and who had been an inhabitant of the place for upwards of twenty years, that this province alone paid to the officers of the crown one hundred million of livres annually (which is over four millions sterling) and this in peace, and double that sum in time of war. From Caen (where there are the handsomest women in France) I set out in the public stage for a place called Enfleur,* where I arrived safe in about six hours, and where I was obliged to wait about two hours for the current to slack, as it runs almost as rapid in this river between this place and Havre de Grace, as in Hell Gate in America. This little town of Enfleur is celebrated for producing from their bakehouses the whitest and best bread of any other place in the whole kingdom. At four in that afternoon I crossed over the river to Havre de Grace in a kind of flat bottomed boat with one sail to her; I observed, however, that the people or boatmen, who undertook the management of her, did not understand their business so well as they ought. This is a very large town, and a seaport, very delightfully situated on the English channel, at the mouth of the river Seine. It lies in lat. 49.20 long. 10 West. It has no harbour, but vessels trading here, as well as ships of war, may enter that bason, which is very large, but this must be done at high water, and when the current of the river does not run away (which current is the most rapid that I ever knew in any other whatever). It was low water when I crossed it, and consequently there was scarcely any motion of the current observable.

About an hour after there was a large galliot, being (as was supposed) too late in regard to the tide, made an attempt to gain

* Honfleur.

the bason, the wind at the same time blowing fresh and favourable for her; when she had got abreast of the bason, the people on board of her lowered down her sails, and endeavoured with a boat to carry a line on shore at the quay, in which they did not succeed, as the current had by this time got to running very rapidly, which swept her away with it. The people in the boat reached the galliot and let go an anchor, which did not check her an instant; the current at length forced her up the river about three leagues, when she struck upon a shoal, and in a few moments after went to pieces, and every soul on board perished.

I was told by some of the people in this place, that they never had seen or heard of any vessel attempting to enter the bason when the current was at its greatest swiftness, but what had been forced by the current upon some of the shoals (which the river abounds with) and lost, both vessel and crew; so great is the rapidity of the tide.

The town is very well built, the streets exceeding handsome, and it is strongly fortified. The public walks a little distance from the town are the most beautiful in every respect I ever saw. The country seats which surround the town are admirably fine, and most delightfully pleasing to the eye of the beholder. I shall not attempt any further description of this place at this time, my stay being only about three hours. After which I continued my journey, and the next place which I came to of any considerable note was Calais, in the province of Picardy. It lies in lat. 51.6. long. about 29. E., twenty-two miles S.E. by S. of Dover (in England). Between these two ports is the narrowest place between France and England, on the British Channel.

Calais is a pretty large town, and well fortified; the buildings mostly of Gothic construction, and a great many of them much destroyed with age, and torn to pieces. They have here a fine

bason, but the entrance into it is very narrow and difficult, owing to a bar that lies directly across the entrance or mouth of it. No vessels of more than a hundred tons burthen can come over the bar at high water, and even at spring tides. They have here a number of packet boats, which ply between this and Dover in time of peace, for the accommodation of the nobility and gentry, who generally pass this way from London to Paris, or from Paris to London, as being the nearest route between those cities.

After tarrying at Calais long enough to take some refreshment, and to have the horses shifted, I set off for Dunkirk, where I arrived in eight hours, and was soon after employed in assisting in fitting for sea the *Eclipse* cutter. Her officers and crew, when ready for sea, consisted of one hundred and ten, and carried 18 six pounders, French pieces. We were ready to sail by the middle of November, when the cutter was warped into the roads of Dunkirk, and all her crew immediately sent on board. On the night of the 20th of November Captain Anthon went on shore, and left directions with me to take good care of the cutter, keep a good lookout, and to have a particular eye to everything on board. About 12 o'clock at night there came on a most violent gale of wind from the N.N.W. and which blew directly on shore, and caused a very bad sea. We had at the time a pilot on board, who soon gave it as his opinion that it would not do to lie much longer where we then lay. He therefore directed the mainsail to be balance reefed, and the storm jib and foresail ready for hoisting at a moment's warning. Very soon after this the cutter brought home her norther-most anchor, and about 2 A.M. she dragged both her anchors, and kept on driving towards the shore. We now hoisted up the balance mainsail, slipt both cables, hoisted up the storm jib and storm foresail, and tried to gain an offing; it being now about half flood, so that we could not enter Dunkirk pier. In this distress, finding it impossible to get

an offing, the wind blew so heavy, with such short sail, we shaped our course for Ostend (a neutral port), bearing from us E.N.E., distance about three hours; but it was not without the greatest difficulty that we got over the bar at the pier head on account of the tide not being up.

The next day Captain Anthon had one of our merchants come on by land and join us, and on the 25th a boat from Dunkirk brought us our cables and anchors which we had left at Dunkirk Roads, and the same day we were ready for sea again; but we were obliged to lie here a few days longer because of contrary winds. Ostend is a very considerable seaport town, lying lat. 51.20. long. 2.50. East, subject to the emperor of Germany; situated in the Austrian Netherlands, and is one of the strongest towns in these parts, and its being at this time a neutral port, so that almost all nations carry on a regular trade with the inhabitants of this wealthy and populous town; and I am told that it grew immensely rich during the last war between the French and the English. The town at this time was so overstocked with inhabitants, and thronged with strangers from different nations, that it was almost impossible to procure a meal of victuals at any of the public houses in the place (or to buy anything to drink either); provisions of all kinds being exceeding scarce and dear. I paid here for merely an ordinary re-. past one and a half crowns. While we lay here we lost about half of our crew, who deserted from us.

On the 1st of December, in the morning, an English cutter, mounting fourteen guns, belonging to the king of England, arrived here, and as soon as she knew who we were, the captain of her sent his boat on board of us, with a challenge to Captain Anthon to meet them without the bar on the following day. She then sailed and stretched out to the place appointed, a considerable distance beyond the pier-head, hauled up the jack at her mainsail, and her

jibsheets to windward, and lay to wait for us, as we supposed, after what had passed between the two captains; ours having sent an answer to the challenge, that he would meet the English cutter as soon after she had gone out as permission was granted.* She lay in this position, which we could plainly discern from the fort at Ostend, until the night came on, and we then lost sight of her. On the morning of the 2d, as soon as the tide would serve, we got under way and stood off about six leagues from the pier-head, but could discover nothing of the swaggering John Englishman. No doubt but the English cutter skulked away in the night, being afraid to meet us; this certainly shewed a great deal of wisdom in the English, for they must have known that we were an overmatch for them. In fact, they did know it, for her first lieutenant, when both cutters lay in the bason at Ostend, came on board of us by my invitation (the captain being absent) and we drank a glass or two of wine together. He then had an opportunity of seeing the number of guns which our cutter carried, and the size; and he also had information as to the number of men which we then had. Besides, we had some chat together, and he at first declared that they thought themselves abundantly able to take us. I told him if we did engage that we should then shew them Yankee play for it. He asked me what I meant by that. I replied, that we should board them instantly after exchanging broadsides. To which he answered, that in that way, he thought the chance in our favor of capturing them, as we had the most men, which were nearly all Yankees. I found by discoursing with this English officer, that his captain had no serious intentions of giving us battle. At 11 A.M. we boarded a neutral packet boat bound from Dover to Ostend. We enquired of the people on board of her if they had seen anything of our intended an-

* It being war time, no vessel was allowed to depart from the port until twenty-four hours after the one which had last sailed had expired, if they belonged to different nations who were at war with each other, and were armed.

tagonist. They replied, that they had not. We then shaped our course for Dunkirk Roads, where we arrived at 4 P.M. and moored ship. The next day having got a fresh supply of seamen, we set sail on a six weeks' cruise, against the enemies of France and America. On the 10th we captured two vessels under English colours, one of which we ransomed for four hundred and seventy guineas, the other we manned and sent her to France. The next day we fell in with a large English ship, a letter of marque, mounting eighteen carriage guns, and carrying forty-five officers and seamen, besides thirteen passengers, men and women; and after a bloody action, which lasted three-quarters of an hour, she struck to us. We had just got possession of her, when the weather, which had been thick for some time, lighted up, and behold! an English frigate was then nearly within gun shot of us. She had, no doubt, been directed that way by the noise of the cannon in the action. We were therefore, without losing a moment's time, forced to abandon our prize, and take to our heels, which at the time were pretty clean, and we crowded all sail from the frigate. In about one hour thereafter we found we out-sailed her considerable; and she, after chasing us four hours, and finding she fell astern of us fast, abandoned the chase and hauled upon the wind, after taking in her light sails. After this we steered for the Land's End, where we arrived on the 15th of December, and the same day we took two sloops, which we ransomed. Also captured a large English brigantine, on board of which we put a prize master and men, and ordered her for France. She was richly laden with dry goods and other articles. The next day at meridian the weather cleared off, and we saw a ship close aboard of us, and soon after discovered her to be a frigate. Made sail from her and she gave chase to us, and continued it until about 4 P.M. when she gave us a bow chase, the shot of which carried away our topmast just above the upper with. She was now chasing us before the wind;

and after this accident the ship gained upon us fast. Night now came on apace, and being close to the English shore, we at once took in our light sails, and hauled close upon the wind. The ship did the same; but we now found we could out-sail her, and at nine at night we lost sight of her, and the next day we put into Cherbourg, hauled into the bason, and gave our privateer a clean bottom.

The port of Cherbourg is upon the English channel, in the province of Normandy, in the French dominions. It is a very excellent harbour for men of war, except when the wind blows from the northward. It lies in lat. 50.00 N. and long. 25 minutes W. It is a pretty large town, the buildings which appear to have been once very elegant, and the architecture good, but they appear now to be going to decay. The bason is a spacious one, and at high tides it will contain twenty men of war, and in which at that time of tide there is about twenty-four feet of water. Vessels which warp into the bason in order to clean or grave their bottoms, may lie with safety at the head of the bason, where they are nearly dry at low water. We hauled our privateer in at the head of the bason, where she lay upon her keel on a kind of sandy bottom, was shored up, and we graved both sides of her with tallow in one tide, or while it was low water and at the full tide we warped her out into the Roads.

The dry dock here, which has cost government a large sum of money, is nearly finished. It has been constructed on purpose for the conveniency of ships of war only. The Roads off Cherbourg are bleak and open, and much exposed to gales of wind from the northward, as I have already noticed; however, it is more than probable that the French will make an excellent harbour here in time of the Roads, as there now are, and have been for some years past, several thousand people employed by government, together with great numbers of flat bottomed boats, wagons, carts &c., &c.,

in order to effect this grand object. They have already by a mole, formed a kind of half moon, extending from the western shore out into the Roads, where there is about seven fathoms of water, the bottom of which is excellent for anchorage; so that several ships of war may ride with safety under this new made land in almost any wind that blows.

Should they once complete what they now have in view, and which I have but little doubt of, so that a fleet of their ships of the line might anchor and lie here with perfect security in any weather, they will in that case annoy the English amazingly in time of war.

There is a strong fortress at about two leagues from the entrance of the bason, founded upon an island (almost a solid bed of rock). This commands the roads completely; besides, the fortifications upon the island, when the harbour is finished, will be directly at the entrance, so that the French here will be under no apprehension of the English making a descent or attacking the town as they have frequently done in years past. The English have no safe seaport along (upon the Channel) eastward of Portsmouth for a fleet of their ships of war. It is true, they often anchor in the Downs, but it is a bleak dangerous place to lie, and where they are exposed to almost every wind that blows. Whereas Cherbourg harbour lies upon the channel, about midway between Portsmouth and the Downs. This will give the French, when their harbour in question is completed, a very superior advantage over their enemies, when war happens between these two great maritime powers.

I had the pleasure to see in this place the celebrated Captain Manly (who was well known in the United States, the first part of our Revolutionary war, as a sea captain, from several very important captures which he made of English vessels, loaded with such kind of articles as was at the time much wanted in the American army). He had just arrived in Cherbourg, with several other

Americans who had recently made their escape from Mill prison in England, where they had been confined about three years. They were without money or clothes, except what they had upon their backs, and which were very shabby. I gave them some money; and to Captain Manly, I was happy to have it in my power to comply with a request which he made to me, and which was to advance him one hundred and fifty dollars in cash; and for which sum he gave me his draft upon Mr. Williams, an American, then resident in Nantz, payable in two months, and which was afterwards duly honored. My heart swelled with joy, in the little pittance which I was enabled to afford my countrymen; and this single transaction I reflected upon afterwards with much pleasing satisfaction; although the reader may think it wears somewhat the appearance of vanity on my part in mentioning it (be it even so) which however, was not my intention.

On the 23d we set sail in order to continue our cruise; and on the day following fell in with an English frigate, which chased us about six hours, and having sprung a leak in the chase, we put back to Cherbourg. Two days were employed in stopping the leak, &c. We put to sea again after this, and shaped our course once more for the Land's End, and were chased every day until the first of January, when we fell in with an English letter of marque mounting twelve carriage guns. She at first made a kind of running fight of it; when orders were given to lay her aboard, which we did, and in doing this, the people on board of the ship quit their quarters and stowed themselves in the hold. The captain of her, as soon as he saw our men on board of his vessel, dowsed the British flag, and yielded her to us. She was from Plymouth, in England, and bound to St. Kitts, in the West Indies. She had at the commencement of the action thirty-five officers, men, and boys. She had four men killed and seven wounded. We had only two men slightly wound-

ed. She was richly laden with English goods. We put a prize master on board of her, and secured them on board of the privateer, she was ordered for Brest. On the 3d there sprung up a heavy gale of wind from the W.S.W. to south, which lasted until the 12th following, and for the most part of the time (we had our carriage guns in the hold, they having been shut down in the first part of the gale) we could not suffer any other sail but a reefed foresail. We were notwithstanding obliged when the wind abated any at different times, to get the storm foresail and jib upon our cutter, in order to clew off the English land, which we could plainly see at no great distance whenever the weather would clear off for a few moments. In this gale of wind a great number of English vessels were driven on shore, the most of which and their crews were lost. We counted in sailing along the English coast upwards of thirty wrecks. On the 13th, the weather being moderate, we took an English brig laden with sea coal; manned her and sent her for France. And on the 14th we put into Morlaix to refit and to recruit our men. We had got ready to sail on the 20th, but the wind remaining contrary, we did not sail till the middle of February, when we made a stretch over near the English land; where, when we arrived, we found the English coast so much lined with English cruisers that it was very difficult for us to capture any prizes and get off without their being retaken. After being chased by frigates and other cruisers, superior in point of force to our privateer, from the time in which we sailed from Morlaix till the 6th of March, we arrived at Dunkirk, with a large ship as a prize, which we took off Dover, under English colours, bound from Ireland to Norway, laden principally with Irish linens. Our privateer was disarmed, and the officers and crew were discharged. The owners of the same privateer now offered me the command of her, which I accepted of; and men were immediately employed in refitting her for another cruise.

In the meantime, I took a trip to London, having now plenty of money; having some time before this been naturalized, and made a French subject of Morlaix. I had also letters of credit from my merchants in Dunkirk, upon Messrs. Charles and Edward Hague, of London, to the amount of fifteen hundred guineas. I told my merchants that I should travel incog.; that I had some private business to transact in that city, and that it was probable I might hear of something while there, that might turn to their advantage, by frequenting the coffee-houses; if I tarried longer than what I expected to do in that city, I advised them to give the command of the privateer which I had accepted of, to some other person, but if they should see fit to wait for my return, I should be very glad to take charge of their interest. They therefore, after having exacted of me my parole, promised that no other person should obtain from them the command of the *Eclipse* but myself, provided that I was ready upon the spot in Dunkirk by the middle of May.

In the middle of March I set out for London upon this secret business; at night I arrived at Ostend, thirty-three miles by land from Dunkirk, and engaged a passage for Dover, with the master of one of the neutral packet boats. The next day I embarked on board and we set sail for Dover with a fair wind, which carried us to this place in about ten hours. Arriving in the port alongside of the quay, the custom-house officers came on board, and began rummaging and searching the passengers' baggage. This alarmed me, as I was sensible that it would not do to have mine (particularly at this time) very closely examined; and therefore I slipt a guinea into the hand of one of these officers, who was in the act of searching and overhauling my baggage; on feeling the yellow shiner (which always has a powerful effect in these cases) he desisted from any further examination. And seeing the rest of his comrades busily engaged in searching the other passengers' effects, he gave my portmanteau,

&c., to a porter who was standing by, and bade him carry it to the next inn. For, said he, 'the gentleman is in a great hurry.' He then gave me the wink to follow (which I felt myself very willing to do, as I was then fearful some one of the other custom-house officers might take it into his head to search my baggage). Arriving at the inn, I paid the porter, and drank a few glasses of porter with the custom-house officer. I hired a post chaise and set off for London, and in about two hours after leaving Dover, I reached the famous city of Canterbury. There I tarried till the next day, and went to see this ancient cathedral, which is of a Gothic construction, and it is said covers more ground of itself than St. Paul's in London. The window glass inside is most beautifully painted with variegated colours, and far exceeds anything of the kind I ever saw. In the inside of this Gothic structure are also to be seen several marble statues, representing some of the ancient kings of Kent, as also several which represent some who have been bishops of the city, and which, I was here told, was founded in the year 589, by one Ethelbert, who at that time was king of the (now) county of Kent. But I was told that the cathedral was nearly twelve hundred years old, by the person who was my guide or conductor to this magnificent pile of buildings. While I was here there was a large concourse of people entered the city, who had been to see some English sailors hanged at or near Deptford, upon the river Thames. Part of this company put up at the same inn where I then lodged, and who related this singular transaction to the landlord and others. They said that these poor sailors were brought from the place where they had been confined, under an escort of horse and foot to the place of execution; that there were eleven in number; that they were marched from the shore upon a kind of wooden floating machine, when they were all put into irons fitted for the purpose, and affixed to their bodies, legs and arms, in such a manner that they could not bend

either; a halter was then put round each of their necks. This done, the floating platform was towed off from the shore under a gallows, which it seems had been erected by the orders for that express purpose, and where there was about twenty-five feet of water. The floating machine, with the criminals and hangmen upon it, was towed under the gallows precisely at high water.* The hangmen then put each halter over the gallows and made them fast, and left the criminals to die at their *leisure*, or as the tide fell, to die by inches. This mode of punishment was certainly new, and deserves to be noticed, being as singular as it is barbarous. This is also another species of *British humanity*, so much boasted of by Britons and their adherents, in the United States and elsewhere. The poor criminals, hanged as before described, were most of them nearly four hours in dying, and their screeches, groans, and cries were heard for some miles from the tragic scene. The landlord informed me that this was the kind of punishment which was inflicted upon every man and boy who were taken by the English under the American or French flags, if they had ever been in the British navy or army, and proved to have been British subjects, whether they had deserted or not; and that these kind of executions had taken place frequently upon the river Thames. Such kind of conduct as this, on the part of the British, rather exceeds their treatment of the American prisoners on board of the *Old Jersey* at New York, or the glass plot in Forton prison, which I have already related. Now, when all these transactions relative to the cruelties of the British towards their fellow creatures, without taking into the account their numerous barbarities in other places (besides New York) in the United States, are held up to view, I defy any one to produce anything in history, ancient or modern, in point of barbarity and cruelty, which has a parallel in any other nation, civil, or even in a

* The tide ebbs and flows in the river Thames about twenty-two feet.

state of nature. After having paid my landlord, I was about stepping into the chaise, in order to continue my journey, when he begged to speak to me privately. When we had gone into a private room and were alone, he asked me if I was provided with guineas. I did not comprehend his meaning and therefore desired him to explain himself, which he did as follows: I perceive, Sir, that you are a stranger; if so, are not you apprehensive of being robbed upon the road between this place and London? For, continued he, there are a great number of highway robbers on that road; and as there have been several people, and that within a few days too, robbed on the road, even in carriages, and in the daytime; therefore, said he (shewing me a purse of guineas at the same time), if you will purchase these counterfeits,* you may avoid being robbed of your genuine guineas, by presenting these to whomsoever attacks you. I was at first a little startled at the fellow's proposition, and intelligence respecting the highwaymen; I was in fact at a loss what to do. I knew if I purchased these counterfeit guineas, and should be detected with these found upon me, being an entire stranger in these parts, the officers of justice might commit me to prison upon suspicion; and where they would have it in their power of accusing me of being a spy, and one who had been sent from France into England, for the purpose of circulating false guineas. But on the other hand, I knew that a greater evil could not befall me at the time than that of being robbed which would inevitably have been the cause of my being betrayed. Upon the whole, I ventured to purchase of the landlord twenty of these counterfeits for a couple of crowns, and then continued my journey towards London, and on my way I passed through Roxbury, a large populous town, and came to the entrance of a large tract of land, overgrown with bushes, nearly as high as a man's breast, and very thick. This

* These were well executed, and would, I believe, pass with ignorant people for genuine ones

I was told, they called Black Heath; and where I was attacked by two men, very elegantly dressed, and well mounted upon very handsome horses (both of them wore at the time masks upon their faces), one of which ordered me to deliver my purse, the other caught hold of the reins of the bridle of the foremost horses, and threatened to shoot the driver if he offered to stir an inch further. Being in the act of feeling for my counterfeits, there appeared just ahead of us a coach and six, accompanied by several gentlemen on horseback. The villains perceiving these people, quit us without their booty, clapt spurs to their horses, and rode off upon the gallop, struck out of the main road, leaped several ditches and fences, and were soon out of sight. I soon after passed the coach and six and concluded that it belonged to an English nobleman, as I saw some of the persons who followed after it dressed in livery.

Most of the gentlemen who were mounted on horseback, and who appeared to be escorting the said coach, were armed each with a hanger or sword, and a pair of pistols. This retinue appeared to the gentlemen highwaymen to be too formidable for them, which was the reason, no doubt, of their going off in such a precipitate manner. I was so near the city of London now (say nine miles) that I could see the steeples above a black cloud of smoke in which the city is constantly enveloped when there is but little wind, owing it is said, to the citizens burning such large quantities of sea coal in the city. I could at the same time observe the spire of St. Paul's Church, soaring considerably above the rest. On the 18th, at 4 P. M. I arrived in the famous city of London and took private lodgings at the sign of the White Bear, in Picadilly street. The next day I waited upon the gentlemen to whom my letters of credit were addressed, Messrs. Charles and Edward Hague,* merchants, living in

*Charles, the former partner in trade with Edward, had been dead some years, but notwithstanding, the firm was still kept up.

Fen-Church-street; and the latter offered me every assistance that was in his power while I remained in the city.

I found that where I lodged an uncle of mine* put up, who was then a colonel in the British army in America; and as I did not like to meet him, I changed my lodgings, and afterwards I put up at a private house not far from St. Paul's. While I remained in the city I made it a custom to visit the coffee-houses, where I heard much said by British officers about the Americans generally. At one of these houses I heard a British officer, who by his military dress and epaulets upon his shoulders, I took to be a colonel; and who by his conversation with another officer, had served in the British army in America, for upwards of four years; but had then a furlow for a few months. He valued himself a good deal upon taking the poor Yankees off (as he called it) in their manner of speaking. "I recollect," said he, "a person who arrived in Boston about the time that the rebels were collecting their forces near this town, and where I then was, who had got permission to come into town; and who told me that the main road leading from New York to Boston was covered with men, marching on in an Indian file to join the rebel forces under the command of the rebel general Washington. Those men, thus on their march, were what they called the militia; some of whom were clothed in rags, with a knapsack, or something like it on their backs, and each had an old rusty musket upon their shoulders some of which the gentleman observed, had no locks to them; and some of these men would carry their muskets, the butt end of them uppermost or in the air, where the muzzle ought to be; with the gun resting sometimes upon the right, and sometimes upon their left shoulder; and these men were frequently several rods from each other. The gentleman in question, to have a little diversion, would

*This was Edward Fanning, a Tory and Colonel of the "King's American Regiment" in America. He died in London, in 1813.

accost them in a familiar way, in this manner: To one, 'Well, my lad, where are you going?' Whose answer would be: 'Why, to Boston, to fight the enemi—where do you think, you tarnal tory-curse you—maple leg roll over you—the old tyke take you,' &c. 'I vow you, brother Jonathan (addressing to one of his comrades), don't you think this clean faced Englishman is a cursed tory,' &c. The gentleman would pass on to the next, and so on, putting the same question to each, and they would answer him in the same way. "Now," says the colonel to the other British officer, to whom he was directing his discourse, and who it seems had never been in America, "what think you of such kind of fellows as have been described to you, the American army being at present made up with these kind of men? I say," (by the by) continued he, "who could have believed that these naked, half paid, half starved, barefooted rebels would ever have dared to face our regular, well fed, well paid and well clothed troops?" "Most certain," replied the other officer, "I never did believe it, and more, I never shall." 'It is too true, my friend,' replied the colonel; 'they have often done it; and besides I could mention a number of instances where the rebels have fairly beaten out our troops, and where our numbers were equal to theirs, and sometimes superior. And this you may rest assured of as an absolute fact, that a regiment of these Yankee troops, will always beat a regiment of British troops, provided that each regiment, British and American, consist of an equal number of officers and soldiers; especially when the contest gets to that pitch, when it becomes necessary to decide it at the point of the bayonet. This is true," said the colonel. 'I have had sufficient experience of it; I had enough of this sort of Yankee play at Bunker Hill.' He then opened his bosom and shewed his friend where he had been wounded in that battle. He then told the officer (who had never been in America) that he had seen enough of the bravery of the

Americans; "so much so," said he, "that I am determined after my furlow is out, if the government orders me to join my regiment again in America, to resign my commission." For, continued the colonel, "we shall never be able, with all our fleet and armies, to conquer the Americans." ("hush," said his friend) "I don't care," replied the colonel, "who hears me, this is my opinion, and I will maintain it even in the presence of the ministry themselves."

The colonel and his friend soon after left the room, and I entered this interesting conversation in one of the pages of my pocket-book, which will have a tendency, among numbers of a similar kind, to show that a great number of British officers, both in their navy and army at this time, were of a like opinion. It certainly, in my opinion, indicated an approaching peace between Great Britain and the United States. I used to frequent this coffee-house, where I heard my countrymen taken off, and was amused with more Yankee stories than I had ever heard related in my own country; and at times I have been so much diverted with them that I have nearly burst my sides with laughter.

My particular business which I had with Messrs. C. and E. H. I closed, and after tarrying in London about three weeks, without being able to complete my other affairs, I set off for Dunkirk, and travelled back the same route on which I came, and on the 8th of April I arrived there. The next day the gentlemen who had sent me on the expedition to London, assembled at the Town house; gave me new instructions, together with several letters from the court of France, to Lord Shelburne, Stormont, and Kepple, &c. The purport of these were, some proposals of peace, and some proposals to the English court, for the liberation of the unfortunate Capt. L. Ryan and McCarter, who were Irishmen, but had both commanded privateers in the French service, when they captured a great number of English vessels, and were at last both taken by

the English, and were then confined at Newgate under sentence of death, on account of their having been British subjects, and were taken under French colours. They had (however, since the sentence was passed upon them) both been respited twice; and the French court now appeared to interest themselves in saving the lives of these two captains; partly on account of their being lieutenants in the French navy, and partly on account of their having rendered great and important services to France.

I left Dunkirk once more on the 9th in the morning and proceeded on my journey for London, passed through Ostend, took passage there in a neutral packet boat, and arrived at Dover on the 10th at 5 A.M. Here again the custom-house officers attempted to search my baggage, but which I avoided by telling them that I was a messenger of peace sent by the French; as a proof of this I shewed them the addresses of the letters already mentioned. On seeing these, and begging them not to detain me, as my business required the utmost secrecy and dispatch, they instantly released me and my baggage, believing no doubt, every word which I had told them to be true. I therefore sent immediately and procured a post chaise, set out for London, and arrived there in a little more than four hours, and soon enough to save the lives of the unfortunate Ryan and McCarter, who were to have been hanged the next day. I delivered the letters which I had been charged with, to the persons to whom they were directed (in their behalf). A reprieve was granted them, and they soon after recovered their liberty. I remained in the city several days *incog.*, and then got a kind of protection signed by Lords Stormont and Way. After this I appeared in a public manner. I was examined before a Lord Mansfield, relative to a number of ransom bills, which it seems had been sent to Messrs. Charles and Edward Hague for collecting. His lordship asked me if I was a French subject, and whether I had seen

the signatures placed or affixed to these bills; to which questions I replied in the affirmative, after being put under oath. The amount of the said bills were afterwards paid, as I was informed, by the gentlemen to whom they had been sent for collection.

I now had leisure time and went to see the natural and artificial curiosities which abound in the city. First my inclination led me to the Tower, where I gained admittance by giving a person half a guinea who was at the gates, and who was said to be one of the king's pages. I observed that his coat (the ground work) was red and almost covered with gold lace. Another person, after I had entered the Tower, undertook to conduct me round, and to shew me everything that my inclination wished to see. He first led me into a large spacious hall, where I saw the statues, both men and horses, as large as life, representing all the kings of England, from Alfred the Great, in succession down to his present majesty; some of whom had been kings of Great Britain after the kingdom of Scotland had been annexed to England, all on horseback, and which are of steel, and always kept admirably bright. Likewise, I here saw a statue of Queen Elizabeth (by the sudden drawing up of a curtain at the farther end of the hall) and an elegant horse, handsomely decorated with bridle, saddle, &c. and a British grenadier as large as life, is represented as holding the reins of the bridle in one hand, and in the other he holds his cap, and appears to be bending towards her majesty, who appears to have just descended from her horse, and lodged the reins of the bridle in the hands of the grenadier. These figures are made of wax. The queen is superbly dressed; the whole being, as I was told, an exact representation at the time the queen arrived at Portsmouth, and the moment she received the certain news of the total defeat and ruin of the grand Spanish Armada. The last statues or figures are pronounced to be by most foreign connossieurs, as well as natives of England who have seen them,

a masterpiece. I was next conducted into a very large hall said to be three hundred feet long, and one hundred broad, and which my conductor informed me contained one hundred and twenty thousand small arms, besides several thousand bayonets, pistols, &c. This room, said he, has been emptied three times during the bloody rebel war in America, and how many more times it will be emptied, continued he, before the war will be at an end, God only knows. There are here kept constantly employed about one hundred men, to keep these arms, &c., bright and clean. In the next place I was shewn many trophies of victory (the Englishman's boast) taken from the French, Dutch, and Spaniards, &c., some very rich and magnificent pavilions, or standards, formerly belonging to these powers. I was afterwards shewn his majesty's regalia, besides many other curious and valuable things; to give a description of each would, I fear, tire the patience of the reader. The following may perhaps suffice, viz. the imperial crown, that all the kings of England have been crowned with, from the time of Edward the confessor, down to the present king. The orb or globe, held in the king's left hand at the coronation, on the top of which is a jewel near an inch and a half in height, of inestimable worth. The royal sceptre, with the dove, the emblem of peace. St. Edward's Curtana,* or the sword of mercy, borne between the two swords of justice, spiritual and temporal. A noble silver font, double gilt, out of which the royal family are christened. A silver fountain, presented to king Charles the II. by the town of Plymouth. The prince of Wales' crown. Queen Mary's crown, globe and scepter, with the diadem she wore in proceeding to her coronation. The ampulla or eagle of gold, which holds the holy oil, which the kings and queens of England are anointed with; and the golden spoon

*An old rusty sword with one edge to it. It has a leather scabbard and is of ancient construction; worth in my estimation about three shillings sterling.

that the bishop pours the oil into, and which are great pieces of antiquity. The rich crown of state, which his majesty wears on his throne in parliament, in which is a large emerald seven inches round. A pearl, the finest and richest in the world, and a ruby of inestimable value. All the above mentioned articles were shewn to me by a woman, by candlelight, each of which I handled by putting my right hand through an iron grate, as I was not permitted to go into the room or vault where these articles were deposited. The last things which were shewn me by this woman, were several small towers, cities, &c. in miniature, and made by a lady of distinction, while she was a prisoner in the Tower a number of years. These last were of the most admirable workmanship. I was also shewn a great variety of shells, taken from the seashore, remarkably curious, besides a great many kinds of wild beasts, birds, &c.brought from foreign countries. Among the last was an eagle of a gray colour, about five feet high, and large in proportion to its height, which my conductor told me had been within the walls of the Tower nearly one hundred years. After seeing all that was curious at the Tower, I went to the British Museum (so called) where there are a great number of figures of waxwork to be seen of different sizes, and in different positions. I must acknowledge that at first view of them they appeared to have life in them. On one side was seen a woman as large as life, seated in an elegant chair, in the act of suckling an infant, both beautiful beyond description. On the opposite side of the room, was seen a young man upon his knees in a most supplicating manner, at the feet of a young lady (representing as his mistress); the former of which, in this humble posture, addressing (or is made to appear so) the idol of his heart, in the most pathetic manner (at least with his eyes, which generally is allowed to speak the language of the heart). Here are also to be seen infants preserved in some kind of spirituous liquors, who were taken

out of their mother's womb, and appeared as animated as when first extracted from thence. I was shewn one of these not more than six inches long, and which the surgeon, who often attends here, declared to be no more than five weeks, from the time the operation was performed, of extracting it from its mother, to the time when it was formed. This, however, I did not believe. I was next led by curiosity, to pay a visit to Westminster Abbey where I saw many statues and other curiosities, far beyond my weak capacity of describing. After this I went to Spring Gardens, where I saw a giant. who was pronounced to be eight feet two inches high, by some persons who had just measured him as I entered the apartment where he was. He was well proportioned as to his body, legs and features, and which coincided with his height. He was genteelly dressed, with a superfine broadcloth red coloured coat, white buff vest and breeches, white stockings, with shoes and buckles; and wore a black cocked hat, in which was a black cockade; and he had much the appearance, especially in his walking, of a military gentleman. I asked him a number of questions, to which he gave pertinent answers, in quite a polite manner. He told me that he was twenty-three years of age, was born in Ireland, where he had been liberally educated,* that his parents were poor working people, and that they were not larger than the common size.

While in this city I made it a custom to pass the evenings either at Covent-Garden, Drury-Lane, Astley's Riding-School, or at the Opera in the Hay-Market. I was one night at the latter place, when his present majesty entered. The spectators ushered his arrival into the house with a general hissing and loud fits of laughter. This surprised me the more, when the Prince of Wales shortly after entered with two lords in waiting, was received with shouts and ap-

* His education, by his own story, was at the expense of a certain Irish lord, and to whom the giant is under obligation to reimburse after he shall have made the tour of Europe.

plause, and a pretty general echo of the word *bravo;* which is a word that signifies that the performers have acted their parts well; and which I have often heard pronounced by the parture (the pit) in France.

Mr. Hague was so generous as to present me with a family ticket for the play, every night when I had an inclination to go to Covent-Garden theatre; and with which I could always gain admittance there, either in the pit or boxes, without its costing me anything. (This was a silver plate of an oval form, about two inches over, with his name engraven on it.) As I understood by him he paid the managers of that theatre by the year, and which I found practised by numerous heads of families in the city.

On the night of the 10th of May I set out from Westminster, and crossed the bridge of that name, which is a noble and grand piece of architecture. The other two bridges a little lower down the river Thames, called London, and Blackfriars, are not to be compared with the fine bridge of Westminster. After having crossed this last, I was most delightfully pleased with two rows of lamps both in a straight line, extending along each side of the road which leads over this large and elegant bridge for two miles distance from it. I sometimes took occasional walks upon St. James's park, where I frequently saw the royal family exercising in walking on foot. The king, upon these occasions was dressed quite plain, and some of the princesses were not known by strangers from any other women of quality. In fact, I noticed that the maids of honour to the queen were more elegantly dressed here than the princesses. I thought these last to be very ordinary, or far from being handsome women.

I was once at Whitehall (the king's palace) on purpose to see his majesty, and waited some time in a large hall, through which the king was to pass on his way to hear some divine service performed in his chapel, but a small distance from the palace. There

were a large crowd of people gathered together out of curiosity to see their king. At length he passed very close to me, accompanied by several lords in waiting, some of whom cried out, "Make room for his majesty to pass;" at this the crowd gave way upon each side, and the king walked on between them. I saw several of these people kneel when he was near them, and attempt to present him (each one) with a paper folded up, which I supposed to have been petitions to his majesty; one of the lords in waiting received these petitions from the hands of those who presented them, but neither the king or his lords made any stop, but continued on through the hall nearly as fast as they could walk. I at that moment, thought of my country, the people of which are without a king; and I hope they may never be cursed with one, with all the leeches of royalty surrounding the throne (as is here the case) and consuming with greedy appetities the hard earnings of the people. O my country! Thou are yet happy, compared to Old England, the subjects of which are at this day (with but few exceptions) in a state of abject slavery: the spoutings and trumpetings for royalty, to the contrary notwithstanding. The king, so much adored by the people of England, is a mere clumsy-made man, with round shoulders, and a great head, which, as the English themselves say, is not overstocked with good sense; and I observed that there was not anything in his countenance which is significant, or that commanded respect. The queen, on the contrary, appeared to have much more of a physiognomy to draw the attention of those who surrounded her; and was generally spoken well of by the subjects of their majesties; and I have no doubt but she was once a tolerable handsome woman. The Prince of Wales is also a handsome figure of a man, and a great lover of the fair sex. I also visited the house of parliament, where I heard several speeches of the celebrated orator Charles Fox, Esq. and who was at this time idolized by the people of England, and I

noticed that he was toasted oftener than the king, in all companies where I had supped, or dined; some of whom were of the first quality of the city. At this time particularly, he was a strenuous advocate for the liberties of the United States, and which was plainly to be seen in his speeches, even upon the floor of parliament. I heard him say in this place, 'That the best way to reconcile the Americans to the people of Great Britain was, for the British ministry to declare them independent, and open a free trade with them at once; and by this step they would have the honour and glory of bringing about a lasting and sincere friendship between the two nations.' These are, as near as I can recollect, his words.

I remained in London about four weeks this time, and then took my departure for France. I passed through Roxbury, and from thence to Dover; where I heard several people at the inn where I put up say, that there would be peace soon; and having no inclination to dispute with them on that score, I walked down upon the quay, and found a neutral packet boat ready to sail for Ostend; on board of which I embarked with my baggage, and she set sail, and in about ten or twelve hours after our departure I was landed in the latter place, where I hired a post chaise, and at 9 at night I arrived at Dunkirk.

On the 12th of May, 1782, I was invested with the command of the *Eclipse* cutter privateer, the same in which I had sailed in with Captain Anthon, as second captain, carrying eighteen French six pounders, mounted on carriages; and her officers and crew consisted of one hundred and ten. Her crew were made up of different nations, viz. French, English, Irish, Dutch, Americans (about fifty-five), Italians, Germans, Flemenders, Maltese, Genoese, Turks, Tunisians, Algerines, &c., almost all of which spoke either French or English.

The manner of fitting out privateers in this part of the country

deserves particular notice. The common practice is this: The owners of privateers advance large sums of money to the officers and crew, before the privateer sails on her intended cruise, viz. to a captain forty-five guineas; to a second captain thirty-five guineas; to each of the lieutenants twenty-five guineas; to the gunner, boatswain, sailing master, and carpenter, fifteen guineas each; and so on for other petty officers, in proportion to their rank on board. To each sailor ten guineas; to each mariner five guineas; to each ordinary seaman five guineas, &c. &c. These different sums of money are advanced by the owners of every privateer fitted out in France, to the officers and crews before sailing, as a kind of bounty. The advances enumerated as above, are for a six weeks' cruise; and the sums are raised to the officers and crews, if the privateers to which they belong should be bound on a longer cruise. All these sums, however, are deducted from their prize money, after the cruise shall have been finished. If no prizes are taken during the same, or not enough when sold to amount to the sums so advanced, the said officers and crews are not liable to refund to the owners the monies, which they may have received or any part thereof.

On the 6th of June we got under way, the wind then being at W.S.W. and stood to the Northward for the coast of Scotland. On the 10th we captured an English brigantine, laden with sea coal, put a prize master and crew on board of her, and ordered her for Dunkirk. After which we ran a large sloop on shore near Scarborough, which we made an attempt to get off, but in this we did not succeed; we then set her on fire. The next day we captured two large coasting sloops, and sunk them, after taking out the crews and putting them on board of the privateer. On the 15th, captured a large English ship off Buchaness* (and finding that she was valuable, being laden principally with Irish linens, besides other effects),

* Buchan Ness, the most eastern headland of Scotland, near Peterhead.

on board of which we put a prize master and fifteen men, and ordered her for Dunkirk. On the 16th towards night, made the Orkney Islands, which lie to the Northward of Scotland, in about 60 deg. of N. lat. and in long. 10.20. W. On the 17th, sent my boat on shore, and demanded some fresh provisions and vegetables, of the magistrates of a small town on one of these Islands, *in the name of John Dyon, captain of his* majesty's cutter the Surprize. About 10 A.M. the boat returned on board with a quantity of fresh provisions, &c. At 4 P.M. several boats from the shore came alongside with several natives in them, whom we could scarcely understand a word they said. At 5 P.M. we obtained a pilot on board, and agreed with him to pilot us into a port called Hope's Bay. At 6 P.M. came to anchor in the aforesaid bay. Here I received intelligence that several vessels were expected about this time from Quebec with furs, &c. and that it was more than probable they would be without a convoy, as it was a rare thing, the inhabitants informed me, to see a French privateer in these seas.

The greater part of my crew at this time were either Americans, or those who could speak English; I therefore kept the pilot on board, and ordered all such as could speak that language, to be confined in the hold. This done, I laid an embargo on seven sail vessels lying in this port. After which, I lay here several days waiting for the Quebec fleet; during which time none of the inhabitants suspected my being an enemy. On the 27th at 2 P.M. there was a report brought me by some of my officers who had come on board from the shore, that there were two English vessels back of the Island, and that they appeared to be standing round this Island to gain the harbour where we were. On hearing this, I went aloft, from whence, with a spy-glass, I could plainly perceive a large ship, which had the appearance of a frigate of twenty-eight guns, and a cutter mounting fourteen guns, both having English colours flying;

and I was the more confident that they were enemies, as I could see that the cutter's sails set quite different from those of her size belonging to the French nation. In this state of perplexity I was somewhat at a loss to know what was best to do first; for I was sensible that no time was to be lost. However, having learned of the the pilot, that these warlike vessels could not enter the port where we lay, that night, in the interim I thought it expedient, and in our power, either to ransom the town or burn it. This last, would not perhaps, be so justifiable according to the rules of war, and usages of civilized nations; but I knew it would in some measure retaliate for the depredations of some of the commanders of the British ships of war upon the coasts of the United States; particularly by James Wallace, commander of the *Rose* sloop of war, who had already, with the assistance of his officers and crew, burnt several small villages upon the American coast; in some of which descents on the said coast, he and his adherents had committed divers acts of the most wanton and barbarous kind towards the inhabitants of said villages, ever recorded in history. Having, with the approbation of my officers, determined upon either burning or ransoming the village, opposite where we were at anchor; I ordered my first lieutenant, with a number of marines well armed. to proceed to the shore, and to lay the town under a contribution of ten thousand pounds sterling, to be executed in one hour, and in that interim to send on board three of the principal magistrates of the town, whom I was to detain as hostages until the money was paid and safely lodged on board of the privateer. The lieutenant, having received his orders how to conduct this affair, landed with his men, and convened the principal inhabitants, to whom he communicated his business, and the reason of his appearance then in the place in a hostile manner. They begged of him to allow them one quarter of an hour to consult upon this matter in private; and which, con-

trary to his orders, he granted them. During this short interval the lieutenant, with his men, fell to plundering the inhabitants of their silver plate and other rich articles; ravishing, or attempting to ravish, the young maidens, and committing other acts of barbarity, all against his particular orders, which so much exasperated the inhabitants that they became desperate; and in their turn they attacked the lieutenant and his men with huge clubs, stones, &c., and obliged them to retreat towards the shore, where they got under cover of the privateer's guns; but the lieutenant, being a desperate fellow, and recollecting that he had not executed any part of his orders, faced about with his men, and rushed upon the inhabitants, who in their turn retreated in a very precipitate manner; several cannon from the privateer, at the same time, loaded with grape. round and canister shot, being discharged at them. The lieutenant, after having set the town on fire together with the vessels which lay aground nearby, came on board with his men, none of whom were hurt, bringing with them a good deal of plate and other valuable articles; also a very beautiful girl, about sixteen years of age, very handsomely dressed, and who the lieutenant begged me to suffer him to detain on board until we arrived in France, promising, when we got there, that he would marry her. Enraged at such a proposition, and being, at first sight of this beautiful young lady, greatly prepossessed in her favour, and willing to restore her to her liberty, and also knowing the lieutenant to be already married, I ordered him immediately to be confined below to his cabin, for disobedience of my orders, and for being so cruel as to bring off the young woman in question without the consent of her friends, and which he at first told me was the case. I now enquired of her if any of my officers or men had made any attempt to injure her. She answered no; and then fell upon her knees, and begged of me in the most moving terms that she was mistress of, in sobs and broken English, not to

carry her away from her parents and friends, but to suffer her to go immediately on shore, without depriving her of that which she said was dearer to her than life. She then made another effort, and clung fast hold of my knees, muttering something to herself of which I did not comprehend the meaning, but supposed it to be a prayer. I lifted her up and seated her in a chair, desiring her to wait a moment, and that I would myself see her safe on shore; but she now (having perhaps not understood me) cried, tore her hair and raved like a mad person. She still thought that I intended to carry her off. The privateer being now under way, I wrote a few lines to the young woman's parents, desiring them to believe me when I disavowed to them that I had had any hand in causing their daughter to be brought on board of my vessel; as proof of which, I had myself seen her safe on shore, and that I did not wage war on women and children; and finally I wished them happy in receiving their daughter again into the bosom of their family, as virtuous as when forced from them. Accordingly, I ordered the boat manned, and embarked with this young Scotch lass, and approached the shore amidst a shower of stones thrown at me by the inhabitants, who had assembled there to oppose my landing. However, as I landed they retired some paces back, and stood with their arms folded across their breasts, in wonder and astonishment at our boldness. Having landed the young woman, I made bold to steal a kiss from her, which was delicious, and which she returned with earnestness, saying "taunky, taunky, guid mon," and then tripped away from me with a light pair of heels.

After this I proceeded on board of the privateer, and about ten at night we set the pilot on shore, paid him five guineas for pilotage (his price), and at twelve the same night we got clear of the Orkneys, and without having run in the way of the two English cruisers, before mentioned. The next day we captured two English

sloops, manned them and sent them for France. The night following we took four English sloops, sunk three of them; the other one, the largest, I caused all the English prisoners who were on board of the privateer, to be transported on board of this sloop, after they had signed a writing, purporting that they had been captured by the *Eclipse* cutter, under French colours,* and mentioning the commander's name; a copy of which they requested me to give them: I then gave them the sloop to go where they pleased; they wished me good-bye, and we parted.

On the 29th, stretched in under the Island of St. Kildy, lying to the Westward of Scotland. Here we sunk two sloops loaded with pipe clay, and ran into a small harbour and came to anchor, where we got a quantity of fresh vegetables and provisions. On the 30th, we arrived off the N.E. part of Ireland, where we fell in with two English frigates, and were chased by them twelve hours. The first part of the chase they were to leeward of us, but having sprung the head of our mast, and the frigates gaining upon us fast, as we were, on account of that misfortune, obliged to shorten sail. In this situation we deliberated a few moments what would be best for us to do, and concluded to bear away before the wind, notwithstanding both frigates were at this time directly to leeward of us. We now, after getting everything ready, bore away, set the foresail, topsail, and crowded all the sail we could. When we came to get the privateer directly before the wind, we found that one of the frigates was now as near us as possible; the other frigate tacked and stood across our fore foot. I was sensible that I should be obliged to run a great risque; and for this reason after the yards were secured, and the throat and peak ties of the mainsail, with chains,

*At this time the captain of each French privateer was entitled to a crown a head for every English prisoner, paid by the French government. This was one reason that I took a certificate of the prisoners when I released them; another was, the English government were bound to return an equal number of Frenchmen.

as was customary previous to coming into action, I ordered every one of the officers and crew to lie as flat upon our deck as they could. As we approached within gun shot of the two frigates, who were now standing head and head, in order to prevent our running betwixt them, the man at helm appeared by his wild steerage of the privateer, to be very much agitated and afraid; perceiving this, I took the helm, and steered the privateer directly between the two frigates. By this, both of them began firing into us; and they hailed us from on board of the largest, and said "Haul down your sails and strike your colours, you Irish renegade rascal". I made no reply, and they repeated the same words several times from on board of both ships, which we were now abreast of, and within pistol shot, so that the officers on deck absolutely fired their pistols into us, the two frigates, perceiving that we were passing them very fast, directed their whole broadsides into us—besides the fire of the marines and top men. A great number of their shot went through our waist and boat, stowed in the chocks upon deck; one of which went through the main boom and fell into our cabin, which weighed twelve pounds. We at last got so far to leeward of both frigates that they ceased firing their broadsides, but kept their bow guns warm in firing at us. Several of our men were wounded, but not a man killed, nor was any of our rigging damaged, but our boom and mast had several shot through them. The wind beginning to fall we set more sail, and night coming on we got clear of both frigates. On the 1st of July, being in sight of Slime Head, we discovered a lofty sail to windward standing immediately towards us. We prepared for action; soon after saw her display English colours; we did the same and hove to for her. I could now perceive that she had twelve guns of a side, and had the appearance of a letter of marque. The men for boarding were ready at their stations upon the bowsprit and the yard arms. She approached within gun shot of

us, and having hailed her, found she was an English ship. I ordered our English ensign hauled down, and a French ensign and an American pendant hoisted; as soon as this was done she poured her starboard broadside into us and the battle commenced. We gave her four broadsides, when the men for boarding cried out, 'A la bordage, mon capitaine.' (Let us board her, captain.) We then ran the privateer alongside of the enemy, when the boarding men leaped on board of her. They now quit their quarters and ran below; and down came the Englishman's flag. She proved to be the *Lovely Lass*, from the Island of Nevis, in the West Indies, bound to Liverpool, where she belonged. She was a valuable prize, loaded with sugar, rum, cotton, and other articles of West-India produce; burthen five hundred and sixty tons, and had mounted at the time twenty-four long nine pound cannon, several short eighteen pound caronades mounted upon carriages, besides swivels, small arms, &c. and carried when she engaged us, seventy-five officers, men and boys. She lost in the action one mate, boatswain, six sailors, and two boys killed, and eleven of her crew were wounded. We lost in this battle, two killed and seven wounded, out of sixty-eight, which was the whole number, including officers, that we had on board at the commencement of the action. We put on board of this valuable prize, the third lieutenant of the privateer as prize master, and sixteen sailors; and ordered him to keep company with us, having concluded to convoy her into some port in France. The next day we took another prize, a brig loaded with provisions, bound from Ireland to Portsmouth; manned her, and ordered her for Morlaix. On the same night we lost sight of our prize, which we undertook to convoy. On the 3d, we shaped our course for L'Orient, in order to refit (being now in want of hands, a new mast and boom, besides provisions, &c.), where I arrived on the 7th, after

having been chased two days successively by an English frigate and cutter.

On the 24th day of July, the privateer being completely refitted and furnished with everything needful, we set sail again from L'Orient in order to finish our cruise. We steered for the coast of Ireland, and arrived off the highlands of Dungarvan, on that coast on the 27th. At 5 P.M. we took a large galliot loaded with sugar and coffee, and a sloop from Glasgow, laden with bales of broadcloths, linens, &c. Put a prize master on board of each, manned them, and ordered them for Morlaix. On the 29th, took a small English sloop from Bristol; the master of which informed me, that he left at that place sixteen sail of merchant ships, mostly letters of marque, waiting for a fair wind to proceed from thence to Cork; and that he understood that they were to be convoyed by a man of war's tender of fourteen guns. After the captain of this sloop had given me this information, we took out of her a few bales of goods, which was all the valuable property she had on board, and gave the captain his sloop and dismissed him. At meridian I sent my boat on shore with the first lieutenant and the boat's crew armed, in order to get some fresh provisions and vegetables, charging him not to molest the inhabitants if they did not oppose his executing my orders; and I furnished him with money, not to take anything of them without paying for it. At 2 P.M. the boat returned on board, bringing off in her one fat ox, a few of the fattest sheep which I ever saw, geese, turkies, fowls, &c. and a young gentleman with his sister (a beautiful young lady). These young people, it seems, the lieutenant had invited on board, telling them that he belonged to his majesty's cutter the Surprise; promising them they should be treated genteelly on board, and have liberty to return on shore at any time they pleased. These young people, being as they said, son and daughter to the Earl of Keith, had been on a hunting match,

and on their return towards home, they fell in with my lieutenant and his party, and accepted of his invitation, having never before this been on board of any vessel whatever.

They were both very handsome and genteelly dressed. The young lady had on a riding habit, and the young gentleman such clothes as were suited to the business, or the party of diversion which he had been upon.

I made them very welcome; ordered something to be set upon the table for them to eat, and some good wine for them to drink, as they appeared to be much fatigued. We chatted a while together, and cracked a few jokes, all was glee and mirth. (When they first came alongside, those of my officers who could not speak English, were ordered below deck.) As soon as the young people had refreshed themselves, they desired to go upon deck to see the great guns (as they termed them). The young lady was very inquisitive, and asked me a great number of questions respecting what she saw. She wished to have one of the carriage guns fired off, which she was gratified with, but appeared to be somewhat frightened at the report of it and begged of me not to order any more fired. The cry of a sail, by a man at masthead, now drew the attention of all. Soon after this we saw that she was a large ship and shewed English colours. I now ordered all hands to quarters, and the men who had been confined in the privateer's hold, who could not speak English, mounted upon the deck, and the young gentleman and lady (who it seems understood French) hearing so many of my crew speak the French tongue, they began to think we were enemies. Now let any one judge of these young people's surprise, when I assured them that our privateer was a French one, and an enemy. Upon hearing this they appeared to be struck dumb with astonishment. The young lady first broke silence, and said, 'My dear sir, I hope you are too good to have any intentions of carrying us to

France,' and before I had time to reply, the young gentleman spoke and said, that he would not be carried to France for a thousand guineas; but if I took him away, he begged in the most humble style, that I would order his sister to be set on shore, adding that their parents were old people, and that it would nearly break their hearts to lose both their children at once. The young lady then replied, with vivacity, if I would set her on shore, she would engage to send me off on board the privateer in four hours, three hundred guineas for the ransom of herself and brother, and that I might detain him on board as a hostage, for the due performance of what she had promised. After she said this, she burst out into tears, crying 'O my dear papa and mamma.'

Having never had any inclination of detaining either of them on board longer than it suited them, I ordered the boat manned, and told these young people that they might go on shore whenever they pleased; when therefore they heard this news, their joy knew no bounds, and their expressions of thankfulness to me were warm and grateful beyond description. The young gentleman now begged to know my name, declaring if ever I should come to be a prisoner, in either Ireland or England, I might command him or his fortune; he then stepped into my cabin, and wrote, and left me his address. I declined, however, telling him my name, or the name of the privateer which I commanded. I was now about handing the young lady over the side, when I begged her to permit me to take one parting kiss, which she without hesitation granted; and which I thought at the time sweeter than the *Scotch kiss*. They then embarked, and I had the pleasure to see them safely landed: after which the boat returned on board, and was immediately hoisted into her chocks. The weather having fell calm; when the ship we saw before the young Irish people were set on shore was now within one league of us and shewed her broadside to us. She

really had the appearance at this time of a ship of war, and shewed thirteen guns of a side. In this stage of the business, I consulted my officers whether it was best to attack her; a major part of them were for this measure, and I found nearly all my crew were in favour of it. We accordingly out sweeps, and endeavored to get alongside or under her stern, before night set in. We soon got within reach of her guns, when she began to fire upon us; but we after this soon got astern of her, where she could only annoy us with her stern chasers. At the setting of the sun we had got close under her stern, within musket shot, and could now perceive that she had a great many soldiers on board. We now gave the privateer a rank sheer, brought our broadside to bear upon her stern, and poured it into them, which made great confusion on board of the enemy. We repeated this several times and then rowed directly alongside of her; when the boarding men being in readiness, they jumped on board of the enemy, part of whom instantly quit their quarters, on seeing a number of naked men* jumping on board of them. In five minutes after my boarding men had got on board of the enemy, they bawled out, 'Quarters, quarters, for God's sake!' and dowsed their colours. She proved to be the *None Such*, an English letter of marque, of Bristol, bound for Cork, laden with the manufactures of Old England. She mounted 26 six pound cannon, part of which were brass; and had on board when she engaged us, by their own account, eighty-seven officers and men. We found killed upon her decks and forecastle fourteen men and boys, and besides they had thrown overboard several of their men who were killed during the action; which continued only 31 minutes. Besides her complement

* We had on board of the privateer about thirty of these boarding men; they were Maltese, Genoese, Turks, and Algerines. They were large, stout, brawny, well made men, and delighted in boarding an enemy. Upon these occasions they stripped themselves naked, excepting a thin pair of drawers, and used no other weapons but a long knife or dirk, which were secured in their girdles around their waists.

of men, she had on board one hundred and twenty-seven British troops, which were destined for America, and were to be joined by others then at Cork. We lost in this action on board of our privateer three killed, and seven wounded. We put on board of this prize the first lieutenant as prize master, and manned her with twenty-five picked men, took out the captain, his two mates, and part of her crew, and transported them on board of the privateer, We took care to see that all the British officers and soldiers on board of the prize were confined below deck, as well as the rest of the Englishmen; and I ordered the prize master not to suffer but one of the prisoners to come on deck at a time, until she arrived in port. I ordered the prize for the first port she could get into in France.*

I was exceeding sorry to learn from some of the Irish people who came on board my privateer a few days after this battle, that my lieutenant who went on shore with the two young people before mentioned, plundered the young man of a gold watch, and who was now gone to France in one of the prizes captured by us, and who I never afterwards saw. I should certainly, if I had seen him, obliged him either to return the watch to the owner, or make restitution for it.

After this I shaped my course for the Isle of Man, in Bristol channel, where I arrived and cruised several days, in hopes of falling in with some rich prizes, or the Bristol fleet, but a violent gale of wind setting in, obliged us to shift our station, and it was not without the greatest difficulty and hazard that we did, under very short sail, double the Land's End. We were several times during this severe trial in the most imminent danger of being cast upon the coast. Having however got into the English channel, we hove to, and lay thirty-six hours under a balance try-sail. On the 9th of August, the weather cleared off and became more moderate. To-

* She arrived safe at Brest.

wards night we took two prizes, a brig and a sloop, put prize masters and men on board of each, taking out nearly all the prisoners, and sent them for Morlaix. At 10 at night, landed a party of men on the coast of Cornwall, well armed, and took off some fresh provisions, which at that time we stood much in need of for our wounded men and prisoners. On the 10th at meridian, we captured two English brigs, in sight of twenty-eight English ships of the line that were then lying at anchor in Torbay, besides several frigates and cutters at anchor with them. The two prizes were laden with provisions, and were bound for the grand fleet just mentioned; manned them and sent them for the first French port they could get into. Afterwards we stretched into a bay near Falmouth, where we could discover a brig and a sloop lying at anchor under the guns of a small fort; we soon got within gun shot of the same and brought to. With this the fort began firing at us pretty briskly; and also upon my boat, which had been sent with a few armed men to take possession of the brig and sloop; the crews of which had at first, when they discovered us to be an enemy, abandoned them and fled towards the shore. The fort was silenced after we had discharged a few broadsides at it. The second lieutenant, with a party of men, was now dispatched to take possession thereof; and on their landing and approaching the fort, I was not a little surprised to see a dozen women quit the same, and make a precipitate retreat from it; and what astonished us still more was, that not a man was, or had been, in the fort at or before the time of my men's entering it. The women, by the by, were each armed with a musket, and as they retreated, they would once in a while face about and discharge their pieces at my men, as they advanced to take possession of the fort; where these last, on entering it, found four four pounders, and six three pounders, mounted upon carriages, which my lieutenant and his party spiked up, and then quit the fort and returned on

board, bringing with them a quantity of powder which they found in said fort. We put a prize master and crew on board of the brig, she being richly laden, and ordered her for Morlaix. The sloop I gave to the English prisoners, which we then had on board, consisting of one hundred and ninety-five, officers, men and boys. The sloop had nothing in her but ballast, of any consequence. The prisoners were very thankful to me for this gift, as well as for their liberation. They, before we parted, made many promises to relieve and assist us, if ever they were acquainted of our being prisoners of war in any part of England. I took a certificate of them, as was customary on such occasions. They gave us three cheers, after which we made sail and stood off from the land.

On the morning of the 11th we fell in with the *Jupiter*,* a fifty gun ship, and one of the fastest sailers in the British navy, and two frigates. They bore from us when we first discovered them about W. by S. distance nearly five leagues; the wind then blowing a fresh gale at W.S.W. We bore away before the wind, and packed all sail upon the privateer. The three ships gave chase to us, and spread all their canvas which would draw. We soon after saw a large cutter directly ahead of us with English colours set. The largest ship astern now hove out a signal, and the cutter hove to to obstruct our passing her. All hands were now called to quarters on board of our privateer. We approached the English cutter fast, and perceived that she mounted fourteen guns, and that she had hauled up the tack of her mainsail, and was prepared to give us a warm reception. The ships in chase of me were now in such a position that in order to avoid them, I was obliged to run within pistol

* The way I came to know that this ship was the *Jupiter* was, having seen and conversed with her 2d lieutenant in Ostend a long time thereafter, and who mentioned several circumstances as they occurred during the chase; and that it was the intention of the captain of the *Jupiter*, if they had captured us, to have hung the captain of the privateer to the yard-arm.

shot of the cutter. We passed her; in doing which we exchanged broadsides. She did us no injury. We then rounded to, and gave her our other broadside, which carried away her topmast, jib tack, and peak tye. In this crippled situation we left her, and continued our course before the wind, without taking in a rag of sail, as the ships were then close to our heels. One of the ships in chase, having got up with the cutter, and hove to, to her assistance, the cutter very soon disappeared as we thought, and we concluded that she sunk, but after this we saw the ship, which had hove to, to assist her, take her in tow, and stretch in towards the land. At 3 P.M. we had so far outsailed them that we had lost sight of all of them but the fifty gun ship, which was now about three leagues distance astern of us; and about the same time we discovered ahead of us the English Channel fleet of men of war, extending in a line from abreast of the east end of the Isle of Wight towards the southward about nine miles. There appeared to be no alternative left us now but to run directly through this line. In order to succeed in this hazardous and Don Quixote attempt, I ordered the French colours hauled down, and an English ensign and pendant hoisted. Soon after we could distinctly count in this fleet twenty-eight ships of the line, several of which were three-deckers; besides a number of frigates, sloops of war, and cutters. Several signals were displayed on board of the ship astern of us. The grand fleet also made several signals. I certainly at this time, made some dependence, and had faith to believe that the deception which I had contemplated, relative to our being able to shun the danger which now awaited us, would succeed. Our cutter having been built in England and was now painted exactly like the king's cutters, and the most of my officers and crew spoke English, and were dressed like them; this being the case, the deception was the more easy. I ordered all those who could speak no English on board of us to go below, and then ap-

proached the English fleet with boldness, entered the centre of their line, passed through between two three-deckers; from on board of both (we being then within pistol shot of them) they hailed us in these words, 'What cutter is that.' The answer was, 'His majesty's cutter Surprize.' We dropped our peak, and dowsed our colours, passing these wooden castles; but did not take in a rag of sail. We had nearly got without hail, when they hallooed us to bring to. We answered ay, ay; but notwithstanding kept on our course. We had now given them the slip, and meant to show them a Yankee trick, by giving them leg bail. The ships of the line in the centre fired several cannon at us, the shot of which flew considerable beyond us, passing over our heads. Finding that we did not bring to, three frigates, a sloop of war, and a cutter, separated from the fleet, and gave chase to us. The fifty gun ship at the same time passed through the grand fleet, and continued to chase us. The cutter appeared to outsail either of them; and she in fact sailed faster than we did. Perceiving this, I ordered the man at the helm from time to time, to give our privateer a rank sheer, and ordered the drag overboard to retard her way through the water. The English cutter came up within musket shot, and began firing into us.* We gave her two broadsides and cut away some of her rigging (which she hove to to repair, as we supposed). But after this she did not attempt even to follow us. This was done just in the dusk of the evening; and at the same time the other ships, except the *Jupiter*, gave over chasing us, and hauled upon a wind, which increased, and the last mentioned ship appeared to gain upon us; however night shut in, and we could not see her with our naked eyes, but could perceive her quite plain with our night-glass. Being by this time much fatigued, after having gone through so many different scenes in the course of the day, and an hungered withal, I stepped

* The English cutter neither killed nor wounded any of our men, nor did us any injury.

below to get some refreshment, not apprehending that we should be taken at this time by any of those ships which had been chasing us, excepting I thought it was doubtful whether we should get clear of the *Jupiter* or not. I had no sooner got below than the fellow at the helm broached to the cutter and carried away our top-mast just above the uppermost with. The steering sail, ringtail, and water sail haulyards gave way, and parted at the same instant, which threw us into some confusion. I ordered the ringtail and water sail cut clear, and took the helm. My gunner, in attempting to execute my orders fell off the mainboom, there being a bad sea running; we strove to save him but did not succeed; the poor fellow was drowned. Having got the cutter before the wind again and the light sails secured on board, all hands were employed with as much expedition as possible in order to get a spare top-mast on end; but before we succeeded in this, the fifty gun ship came up with us, ran under our stern, and luffed up under our lee, and accosted us in this manner, "Strike, you d——d Irish rascal; drop the peak of your mainsail, and haul down your jib sheet to the windward; hoist out your boat, and come on board of his majesty's ship." I answered that my boat was so full of holes that she could not swim. It was now about four o'clock in the morning and nearly three hours before day would break, no moon, and pretty dark. They replied, that they would hoist out their own boat, and ordered me to hoist a lighted lanthorn at the peak, which was complied with. She had her light sails taken in, her courses hauled up, ready for action, with her head to the southward, ours at the same time being in the opposite direction.

My officers were now in readiness to surrender as prisoners of war to the enemy, having dressed themselves in their best clothes, and two shirts a piece; I suggested to them the idea and probability there was at present of making our escape from the enemy. To

this, a majority of them was for attempting this truly hazardous business; and I told them I would risk myself at helm till we should get out of reach of the enemy's shot. The plan thus being concerted, we proceeded to carry it into effect, the enemy being at this stage of the business, busily employed in hoisting out their boat, which we knew by the boatswain's call. I ordered some men to sway up the peak and let draw the jib sheets; this done, I directed every man and boy to lie flat upon the deck; and our privateer just began to gather headway, when the enemy's boat left the ship in order to board us. I desired every one to obey my orders, and we should quickly get away from the enemy (and which they paid implicit obedience to); but I must confess, I had not much faith at the same time of getting away from them. They perceiving our intentions, their boat returned on board, and she instantly began a most tremendous fire upon us from all parts of the ship, and she had the appearance for a few minutes, of a luminous body of fire. She was at this time within musket shot of us.* They by this time finding that we were trying to make our escape in good earnest, wore ship, and got aboard their fore and main tacks, set their top gallant sails, and in fact, crowded all the sail which they could set by the wind after us. She, however, continued to fire her bow chasers at us. We now hove in stays, and were obliged in stretching by her to expose ourselves to another broadside, as well as from the musketry. I knew this to be the pinch of the game; and therefore, cautioned once more, everybody upon deck to lie as close as possible. She blazed away at us from every part of her as we passed each other. At this moment I received a flesh wound in the leg, and another in the forehead, by a splinter, and which knocked me down, and stunned me (upon deck) where I lay some time motionless.

*Several musket balls were afterwards picked up upon our deck, and a number found in our spars.

Several of my officers and men were wounded at the same time and some of them cried out, 'For God's sake, let us strike.' Having now recovered myself, and got hold of the helm, I answered these men, that in ten or fifteen minutes more we should be out of gun shot of the enemy. We were now gaining away from the enemy very fast. We tacked again, and in passing her this time she could but just reach us with her shot. We found it best to tack often, as we were then plying to windward, and as we could manage our privateer with more ease and expedition than the enemy, we could ply to the windward much faster than they could; accordingly, the next time we passed the ship, though she fired her broadside at us, yet her shot did not reach us. At daylight in the morning the enemy were at least four leagues to leeward of us; and she soon after gave up the chase and bore away from us. It is my opinion that the enemy expended more powder and shot in firing at us, than she would have done in an engagement with an enemy's ship of equal force, two hours. So much for the Irish rascal;—as they called me—but the bird had flown. And now, messieurs bragadocio Englishmen, you may return home and tell your royal master, 'that you catched an Irishman and lost him.'*

In this running fight we did not fire a single gun. We had enough else to do, to manoeuver our privateer, and keep out of reach as much as possible of the shot of the enemy. We had on this occasion, thirteen men slightly wounded, but none killed. Our waist and boat (stowed in the chocks) were pierced through and through with eighteen and nine pound shot. Our sails also were full of shot holes; not less than seven hundred and fifty of these last could be counted (after we had got clear of the *Jupiter*) in our mainsail alone; but during the whole of her firing upon and into our

*Alluding to a record once made at sea in a Yankee log book, of 'catched a dolphin and lost it.'

privateer, she did not cut away a single piece of rope or rigging of any kind whatsoever. We now had some leisure time to dress our wounded men, and to take some refreshment, there not being any vessels in sight except the *Jupiter*, and she was so far to leeward that we could but just discern her.

At 10 o'clock next morning we were close in with the English land, opposite a small seaport called Rye; here we captured an English brig* laden with sea coal, put a prize master and crew on board, and ordered her for Dunkirk. Also took a small sloop in ballast, and gave her to the English prisoners, to the number of ninety-four; we took a certificate of them, and they made us many proffers of friendship, and wished us well, gave us three cheers, and departed.

On the following day, at meridian, the wind being at S.W. by S. and the weather somewhat thick and cloudy, we discovered a sail to windward standing towards us. We hove to, waited for her to come up with us, and prepared for action. Soon after we could plainly see that she shewed twelve guns of a side, and appeared to be full of troops. She soon after passed us within gun shot, but did not attempt to speak us. We at this time had English colours flying, which I ordered to be hauled down, and French colours hoisted in their place. The enemy, as soon as they discovered who we were, took in their sails, and hauled by the wind for us. The boarding men were now ready at their stations, and began crying as usual, 'A la bordage, mon capitaine.' The swaggering English, having got within cannon shot, gave us a broadside, which we returned, and the action commenced within musket shot. The English fired briskly for about fifteen minutes, and then began to slacken. At about the same time I was wounded by a musket ball, which passed through my left leg, which bled so fast that my shoe was

* Several Englishmen entered on board of the privateer, belonging to vessels which we took.

instantly full of blood.* I took a handkerchief and bound it round the wound, and found no inconvenience in remaining at my station upon deck during the remainder of the action. We could now hear the groans of the wounded and dying on board of the enemy, whereas we had not as yet lost a single man. In order to make quick work, and put an end to the contest, I ordered the privateer laid alongside of the vaunting English;† the naked and other boarding men, being strung upon the yards, bowsprit, &c., in a full flow of spirits, and anxious for the moment to arrive, when they could leap on board of the enemy. At length we out manoeuvered them so much, as to run under her stern, poured our broadside into her, which raked them fore and aft, and made a dreadful slaughter of them; we luffed up under her lee, and our boarding men jumped on board of the enemy, where the conflict was bloody for about six minutes, when we gained the victory; most of the English, as usual, having quit their quarters, and skulked below decks, nearly at the same time my men had got on board of them. However, at the very instant the enemy bawled out for quarters, they were upon their decks, almost double the number of them to the number of which my men consisted, then on board of the ship. The fact was, that in this instance, as well as in several others of a similar kind, the courage of the Englishmen failed them at the moment they saw a crowd of naked men leaping on board of them, or suspended in the air, ready to drop down upon their heads. I say, when they saw such sights as these, they were converted instantly into the greatest cowards and poltroons in nature; they became mere shadows. I speak from knowing the fact, having so often had ocular demonstrations of the truth of what I have here advanced. Her flag being

* I did not feel the ball when it struck my leg, nor did any one besides myself know that I was wounded until the action was over.

† The English kept constantly hallooing, 'Strike, you French beggars, or we will give you no quarters.'

struck, she proved to be the *Lord Howe*, from Cork, bound to the Downs; was, when taken, in the king's service, and commanded by a lieutenant of the navy. She was about six hundred tons burthen, had mounted upon carriages twenty-four long six-pound cannon, besides several short carronades, cowhorns, swivels, &c. Her officers and men (mostly old men-of-war's-men), at the commencement of the battle, according to the report made to me by the lieutenant, consisted of eighty-seven. Besides these, she had at the time, one hundred and ten officers and soldiers, belonging to one of the English regiments, which had been stationed in Ireland. The enemy lost in the action one major, one lieutenant (of the land forces), and twenty-one soldiers; one master's mate, one boatswain, seventeen seamen, and three boys killed; and thirty-eight officers, seamen, and soldiers wounded. On board of the privateer, we had killed, one quartermaster, one gunner's mate, one boatswain's mate, ten seamen, five marines, and two boys, besides twenty-two officers and others, wounded. The whole number of our crew, including officers, at the time of the commencement of this battle, on board of our privateer, did not exceed seventy-two. The prize was not very valuable, being only in a set of ballast, which consisted of beef, pork, and butter. We had but just got all the prisoners transported on board of the privateer, and confined in our hold (the greater part of whom we put in irons for our safety), when the weather, which had been dark and cloudy, cleared off; and behold! an English frigate of thirty-two guns was close aboard of us. We were therefore obliged to abandon our prize, and endeavour to give her leg bail. But as a trophy of our victory, we brought off the colours of our antagonist; and wrote, with chalk upon her quarterdeck, some of the particulars of the battle. We did not leave any person on board of the prize; and before we quit her part of her guns were thrown overboard, and the rest spiked up. The frigate was now so

near us that she fired several shot at us and over us, this being the case, no time was to be lost, on our part. We therefore spread all the sail that we could upon the privateer; having previous to this got a new top-mast on end. In one hour after, we saw the frigate pass close aboard of the ship, which we had captured, but she made no stop, but continued her pursuit after us before the wind; and after about three hours' fruitless chase, finding that we outdistanced her, she took in her light sails and trimmed by the wind.

I now concluded to return to Dunkirk, and accordingly shaped my course for that port. I had several reasons, as I thought, which would justify my adopting this measure. Among which were these: I had a great number of wounded men on board; and the most of them were obliged to be crowded together among the English, in the hold, where they could not well be taken care of. I had on board a great many prisoners, among whom were many which were wounded; and we ran a great risque of our own lives, by the great possibility there was of their rising and overpowering us. We were not in a situation to give battle to an enemy of equal force, on account of our being so crowded with prisoners of war. We could muster but about thirty well men in all, including officers, belonging to my privateer, at this time. I was wounded myself, and now confined to my cabin; my leg was very sore and pained me very much, the bones having been a good deal shattered, and I could not bear any weight upon it. And we were also at this time in great want of provisions. These reasons I minuted down in my journal as they occurred to me, to be shown to my owners, if circumstances required it. I arrived at Dunkirk, two days after the battle which I had with the English twenty-four gun ship, which I was obliged to abandon, and as soon as we were in port, and made fast to the quay, the people flocked down from all parts of the town, to see our shattered privateer. The commandant of the place was one of the

first who tendered me his services, and helped me to get into his own coach, in which I was carried to his house, where I was waited upon by nearly all the king's officers then in Dunkirk, and where I had every kind attention shewn me by every one of the commandant's family. Three days after I was carried to the Hotel D'Estaing, where I used to lodge, and where I was confined to my room about three weeks, during which time I was visited by not only the first gentlemen in the town, but the ladies, who appeared to be much interested in my recovery. My owners also visited me the most frequent of any others, and appeared to be very anxious for the restoration of my health. (As during my confinement, having caught a cold in my leg, it impaired my health very much.) They told me they had got a new brig built on purpose for me, sheathed with copper, and modeled upon an entire new construction; and it was said by those who were judges, that she would be the fastest sailer ever built in Dunkirk. She was to mount eighteen nine pounders; and they informed me they were daily in expectations of her masts arriving from Norway, to which place they had sent almost on purpose for them, as there were no spars in Dunkirk at the time (except in the king's yard, and they could not be spared) which would be anyway suitable for the brig's masts. One of my owners importuned me to put up at his house, after I had so far recovered as to be able to walk; and where I lodged and made it my home at his house. His daughter, who owned part of the brig,* paid great attention to me, somewhat bordering upon love. Her partiality for me was the first topic of conversation addressed to me in every company where I happened to be. But I was then too much of a warrior to listen to the subject of love. Besides, the lady in question was then about thirty-five years of age, very stiff and

* It is not uncommon, in war time, in France, for young ladies of fortune to own one or more shares in privateers, fitted out from all ports in France.

formal in her manners, very ordinary in both shape and features, and in fact was such a kind of a female as would be called in my country an old maid. But why should I discover her weakness? However, in order to avoid her importunity, while we were waiting for the new brig's masts, I purchased a part of a small cutter, of about forty tons, English built, and set people to work upon her, to get her ready for a cruise. As soon as this circumstance was known to the lady in question, she insisted upon taking a few shares in this cutter; for, by the by, she was very rich. To this the owners of said privateer acquiesced in; and she was ready for a cruise by the 20th of October. I waited upon the judge of the admiralty, to ask him to grant a commission for this small cutter, which we had named the *Ranger*. He appeared to be somewhat surprised, that I should ask for the grant of a commission for so small a vessel; and asked me what had become of the large cutter which I had commanded. I replied, that she was laid up, and that she had got so old and crazy, that I did not choose to venture myself another cruise in her; especially, as the winter was setting in, and that she leaked so bad, and appeared to work so much in the last gale of wind which I had on the last cruise, that I did not think her a safe vessel, with the guns which she carried. The judge appeared to listen with attention to what I said; and then said, Sir, I have the honour to acquaint you, that his most Christian majesty's minister of the marine department,* hearing of your bravery, in divers instances, in supporting the honour and dignity of the French flag; particularly during your last cruise, has appointed you a lieutenant in the French navy, and attached to this appointment, half pay of such officer during life (your continuing to reside in France during that time, being complied with), otherwise while you do remain in the kingdom. In saying these words, he desired me to sit down,

* Monseigneur the Marquis de Castre. (De Castries.)

and then he ordered his servant to step to the bureau de classes,* and get my commission; who soon after returned with a roll of parchment in his hand, which was my commission. The judge, after passing some high encomiums upon my late conduct, presented me with my commission. I told the judge, that I would do myself the honour of accepting it at some other time, but that at present I wished it to remain on file in his office. And after a long conversation upon several subjects, I obtained a commission for the *Ranger*. I shipped one lieutenant only,† a brave enterprising officer, with whom I had formerly been acquainted (having been a fellow prisoner with him in Forton prison, in England), one boatswain, one gunner and twenty American seamen; whom I advanced ten guineas each, as earnest money for a cruise of fifteen days, which was as long as I intended the cruise to last. The cutter mounted only three four pounders upon carriage, and six swivels, with every warlike implement necessary for boarding an enemy. It was in this way that we contemplated capturing English vessels, and not by the assistance of dependence upon our cannon.

I set sail from Dunkirk in said privateer, with a fair wind, for the English coast, on the evening of the 23d of October, and shaped our course for the Downs. At daylight next morning we found ourselves amidst an English fleet of sixty odd sail of ships and other vessels, not far from Dover, all of which appeared to be bound to the westward; and we had at that time a light breeze of wind from the eastward. The first thing we did in this perilous situation, was to cover our guns with light sails, unship our swivels, and stow them away, (our guns having been housed) and hoist English colours. We steered along the same course which they did, I also ordered all my men below, except the one at the helm and two others, and dis-

* The custom house.
† Thomas Greenleaf, since a printer in the city of New York.

guised our privateer as much as possible, so as to make her appear like a coasting vessel. As soon as it was broad daylight, in reconnoitreing the fleet, I could not discover but one frigate of thirty-two guns among them, and she appeared to be the commodore, by her broad pendant; there was however, several letters of marque among them, mounting from four to sixteen carriage guns; besides two large sixteen gun cutters. At meridian the wind shifted to the westward, but was very light, and the current ahead. The commodore made a signal for the fleet to bring to and come to anchor. This being done, I had the mortification to see several boats passing and repassing from one ship to another, and was momently in expectation of their paying me a visit. And if they had, they must have discovered who we were in all human probability; however, our alarms on this score subsided, when we saw the vessels who had got out their boats to visit each other, hoist them on board. At 5 P.M. the signal was made for the fleet to get under way, we did the same, and steered along with them. My lieutenant and myself now cracked some jokes on the subject of being made prisoners again. We spoke two ships and a brig towards night, and passed within pistol shot of them; and besides, had a long conversation with the people on board of one of the ships, the wind being light and the sea smooth. On the first night we agreed not to separate from the fleet until we had captured some of them. (Whereas we might have possibly sneaked away, and got clear of them this very night, without its being attended with any great risque, had we made the attempt.) But the fact was, we could not reconcile it to ourselves, to be forced to quit so many valuable vessels, as we expected there were in the fleet, without making the trial agreed upon. We found by conversing, as before mentioned, with some of those who were in one of these vessels, that the whole fleet was bound for Portsmouth. In fine, we kept company with this fleet (without I

believe, being suspected by the English of being an enemy) three days and two nights, during which the winds were ahead and very light; and on the third night (the two preceding nights having been too light to attack either of the fleet) we made the attempt, and succeeded in the following manner. Before dark, the sun having set in or behind a dark cloud, and the weather having at the same time, an appearance of becoming squally, the commodore made a signal, by firing three guns, and hoisting several flags, which we understood afterwards by some of the prisoners, was for the fleet to disperse and seek shelter in the nearest port, which was Rye, then not far distant to the Northward and Eastward of us. At 9 P.M. we ran under the lee of a large ship (having our men ready for boarding) and hailed them, and asked them if they were acquainted with going into that port. They answered in the negative. I then demanded of them, if we should put a pilot on board of them. To which they replied, 'ay, ay.' It was then very dark, and nearly all the ship's crew were upon the yards, reefing her top-sails. I then ran under her lee quarter, and ordered the lieutenant, who had the command of the men for boarding, to leap on board with his party, which he did instantly. The captain of the ship, with his men upon deck made but a faint resistance; and after a short skirmish, the English yielded and were made prisoners, as were those also who were upon her yards, as they came down. Not a single cannon or musket was discharged by either party during the conflict, and but three or four pistols. The enemy had several slightly wounded. The lieutenant, the first man who mounted on board of the ship, and three others of his party, were also wounded, but very slightly. She proved to be the *Maria*, letter of marque, mounting eight double fortified 6 pound cannon, and mounted upon carriages between decks; and was calculated to fight then in close quarters, as nearly all her leading rigging were led between decks, in such a

manner as to manoeuver the ship without exposing her men to the fire of an enemy. Her crew, including the captain and his officers, consisted of thirty-five picked men, besides three gentlemen passengers. She was bound from the Downs to Portsmouth, laden with sundry articles for the navy, and was one of the fleet aforesaid. As soon as we had got all the prisoners secured in irons in the privateer's hold, I ordered the first lieutenant to take charge of the ship; put ten men on board to assist in working her; gave him a copy of my commission, and directed him to steer across the channel, and make the first French port in his power, and to crowd as much sail upon the prize as she could carry. Several of the lights of the fleet were now plainly seen, notwithstanding the darkness of the night; however, no alarm guns were as yet fired by any of them. We next ran alongside of a large brigantine, and boarded and took her, no resistance being made by her crew. She was one of the fleet, mounted four carriage guns, and manned with fifteen men and boys, including the captain and mate, laden with sheathing copper for the navy; and was called the *Speedwell*. Put a prize master and six men on board of her; took out the prisoners and secured them in our hold, and ordered the prize master to make all sail, and crowd over for the French shore as fast as possible, and get into the first port he could. The next thing which I did was to board a large sloop, and capture her; and we ran a great risque in laying alongside of her, (as the wind blew fresh at W.S.W. and the sea ran pretty high), of going to the bottom; and the prisoners who were confined in our hold made a dreadful noise; hallooing that we were sinking, and that the water came in where they were confined, very fast. However, all this ado did not induce me to quit this last prize without manning her for France, and taking out the prisoners, both of which was completed in a few minutes. I put the boatswain and gunner on board of this prize (neither of which understood navigating a

vessel) and one seaman; gave the boatswain a copy of my commission, and gave him the same orders as I had given the other two prize masters. This last prize had in a few bales of dry goods; the rest of her lading was pigs of lead, and sea coal. She was from the river Thames, bound for Portsmouth, was one of the fleet, and called the *Dolphin.* In taking these prizes, securing the prisoners, and manning them, spun away the greater part of the night, and I began to think seriously of sculking off as fast as possible. I had now only left on board with me two Irish lads (although I shipped them at Dunkirk, for American seamen), neither of whom could steer. This placed me in a very awkward situation; as I knew it would not be safe to let any of the prisoners out of the hold, to assist in working our privateer. However, I made shift to set some sail and left the fleet; and at daybreak we could distinctly hear alarm guns fired. We were now several leagues from them. At 6 A.M. I had overtaken two of my prizes, to wit, the brigantine and the sloop; and at the same time saw a large cutter bearing down upon us, which appeared to have come from the fleet. We were then abreast of the port of Dieppe, a small seaport upon the French coast. I spoke my prizes, and ordered those who had command of them to endeavour to gain that port, not thinking it prudent to remain with them; as in that case I might make my escape with the privateer, but my prizes would certainly be retaken (provided the cutter in question was an English one). I then hauled upon a wind to the northward and eastward, the wind being then about N.N.W. The large cutter at the same time stood nearly across our fore foot; and when we had got nearly out of sight of our prizes, I bore away nearly before the wind; the enemy's cutter did the same. I could not set any more sail, being obliged to keep the helm myself, for the reason before given; and the two lads, that were left on board of my original crew, did not know how to set even the square sail and top sail.

I could now perceive that the cutter in chase of me gained upon us very fast, and at 2 P.M. she came up with and captured me. She mounted fourteen carriage guns, was in the king's service, and commanded by a lieutenant in the royal navy, by the name of Laines.* We found, after the *Ranger* was taken, that she would sail faster than the cutter which took us, when she came to be managed right, and a sufficiency of sail set upon her. The commander of the king's cutter I was acquainted with, having seen him in Ostend some time before, where we lodged both together in that place. He used me with friendship and indulgence, while on board of his vessel. Both cutters now steered for Dover. The captain of the large prize, which I had taken in the night, out of the English fleet (had been liberated from irons, as had also all the English, after they had been retaken), made several attempts to kill himself, on account of his having been boarded and captured, by such a small pickaroon privateer; and which his own countrymen upbraided him with, having bragged only the night before he was taken, that he was able to take a French privateer of sixteen guns. They were obliged to confine him to his bed, and to put a sentinel over him, to prevent his committing suicide.

At 10 o'clock on the 2d day after I was captured, we arrived at Dover, and came to anchor nearly abreast of the town; which was soon after in an uproar, when they found that the person, who went by the name of 'John Dyon, commander of his majesty's cutter the Surprize,'† was taken a prisoner, and that he was then on board of a cutter lying off the town. The next morning the cutter's boat was ordered to be manned, and carry me on shore with my baggage, and

* No such name appears in the British Navy list, but there were four named Lane, one of whom is probably the man.—[Ed.]

† The reader probably recollects that I assumed that name, when I commanded the *Eclipse* cutter of eighteen guns. This circumstance became known in England, and was published in the Gazettes.

the two lads taken with me. Accordingly we embarked on board of the boat, and the second lieutenant with us; and the boat's crew rowed towards the shore, and as they approached the key, which was covered with women, and appeared to amount to about two hundred, who had heard of my being captured, and who it seemed, by their conduct, were determined to execute the old *Levitical law* upon me, by stoning me to death. They threw stones at me as we drew near the quay, which flew so thick, and in such showers, that it was impossible for me to escape being hurt. And it surprised me very much, to hear the heroines cry out, 'Welcome, welcome, captain Dyon.' These expressions were followed instantly by showers of stones, which pelted me so much, and so often repeated, as occasioned my head to swell to double its ordinary size, and caused it to be very painful; and as good luck would have it, I had on at the time a glazed hat (otherwise I should have been in the greatest hazard of losing my life), which I pulled over my face, to prevent losing my eyes. And such oaths, imprecations and threats, as these heroines uttered at me, I never before heard proceed from the mouth of any human being. At length a guard consisting of upwards of one hundred officers and soldiers, were sent express to disperse the mob; a part of which, after I landed, conducted me, and the two lads taken with me, to the fort, where we were examined by a young man about seventeen years of age, and commissary for prisoners of war;* and a one-eyed, surly looking fellow, who had been first lieutenant on board of the *Rose* sloop of war, commanded by that noted plunderer, J. Wallace, and a long time stationed at or near Newport, in the first part of the American revolution.

This lieutenant boasted of his great knowledge of the American coast, from New Hampshire to Georgia; and said, that he knew the way in and out of every seaport, within those two extremities; and

* Said to be by the people in Dover, a certain nobleman's bastard.

that he knew the bearings and distances from one cape or headland to another, all along that extent of sea coast. And I was afterwards fully convinced that he did know something of what he boasted, from the questions he put to me. His station here at present, was that of regulating captain at this port, and held his office under the king: and who was appointed to examine all the prisoners brought here, or into the ports nearby, by his majesty's cruisers of all descriptions. And his universal knowledge of the American coast was (as I was told) the reason of his appointment under the crown in this place.

The two lads were examined first, before the commissary and the regulating captain, and were by these last found to be Irish boys, and in consequence of which they were sent on board of the guard ship lying off Dover, and were afterwards hung, for being taken under an enemy's flag, and proved to be British subjects.

I was then conducted into the presence of these two king's officers; and at my first entrance into the room where they were, the regulating captain swore that I was an Englishman, and the commissary, after asking me a few questions, declared that I was an Irishman. The interrogatories which they intended to put to me, were already written down, and lying on a table before the king's officers. The first question which they put to me was: 'Where were you born?' When I had answered it, they made a great deal of diversion to themselves: and the regulating captain told several Yankee stories, relative to the town and the people, where I said I was born. They afterwards put a great number of other questions to me; such as, 'Is there a lighthouse at the mouth of New London harbour? Upon which hand do you leave it, in going into the same? How far is it from the lighthouse to the West end of Fisher's Island; and what course and distance. How far is it from the mouth of New London harbour to the mouth of the Connecticut river? Who

was his majesty's collector in New London, before the rebel war broke out in America?' &c. &c.

To all of which questions, I gave such kind of answers, as appeared to convince these officers, that I was really an American by birth. After this the commissary told me, that I might be admitted upon my parole, if I chose it, but at the same time, advised me not to be paroled; giving this as a reason, that if I was committed to close confinement, I should be so much the sooner set at liberty, by being exchanged. However, he told me I might choose which I pleased: and I chose to be close confined; and the commissary assured me, that I should have a small apartment in prison by myself, and should have the liberty of the yard, during every day I remained a prisoner: and he besides, pledged his word and honour, that I should go over to France in the first cartel vessel which should be dispatched from that quarter, and which he thought would probably go to Calais, in the course of eight or ten days, with prisoners. I also knew that if I had accepted of my parole, and had remained in Dover, that it was likely that my boarding and lodging would have, in a short time, amounted to a considerable sum of money, as I had, after I first landed, paid at an inn half a guinea for my breakfast only; which consisted of a dish or two of coffee, a wheaten toast, and some dried beef, shredded up very thin.

When I had gone through with my examination, I was dismissed from the guard-house, and was conducted from thence by a corporal and four soldiers, to Deal, a small town situate at or near the mouth of the river Thames, about eleven miles from Dover. At the first of these places I remained a prisoner (but with every indulgence, as had been promised me by the commissary) only ten days. I was then exchanged, and arrived in Dunkirk on the 17th

day after sailing on my cruise,* where I found all my prizes safe (taken out of the fleet, as before related).

I now found the brig which was destined for me launched, but she was still in want of masts. I purchased a quarter of her; and liking not to remain idle, I purchased a small lugsail privateer, which had just returned from a cruise, burthen about twenty-five tons, carrying six three pound cannon; shipped my officers and men to the number of twenty-one; paid them the customary bounty, and sailed again on a cruise, the fifth day after my return to Dunkirk from my last cruise. The 2d day of this last cruise, off the Downs, I fell in with an English frigate (which had been captured from the French) called the *Belle Poule*, of twenty-eight guns, commanded by one Phips, and after a chase of ten hours she captured us; one of her boats soon boarded us, and I was sent on board of the frigate, where I underwent an examination by almost every officer upon her quarterdeck. The captain of the frigate presently after, as drunk as a beast, came upon the quarterdeck, and insulted me in the most abusive and gross manner. He called me a d——d Irish scoundrel; a d——d Irish renegade rascal; and put his fist near my face several times. I had spirit enough to tell him, that he did not act like a gentleman, in abusing a prisoner, in the manner he did me. This nettled him a good deal, and he instantly ordered one of his officers to call the master at arms, who made his appearance soon after. The captain of the frigate then ordered this man to 'take that Irish villain,' pointing to me, 'and put him in irons between decks, hands and feet; and let the rascal be fed upon nothing else but bread and water' (addressing himself to his first lieutenant). 'I will punish the scoundrel.' I was now dragged down upon the gun deck, and put in irons between a couple of guns, comformable to orders; but previous to this the master of arms, and

* In this cruise I made to myself upwards of one thousand guineas.

others, stripped me of every rag of my clothes which I then had on, in lieu of which they gave me a dirty frock and trousers. Besides, these fellows abused me very much; they even kicked me several times about my body, to make themselves diversion. I had with me at this time, a commission for the privateer, and my commission as a lieutenant in the French navy; which one of the lieutenants of the frigate read* in the presence of the captain and his officer and interpreted it to them as he read it; in doing which, they made a great deal of royal sport, and appeared to be highly diverted; and the captain of the frigate, in order to finish this disgraceful scene of mirth and joy, took the commission out of the lieutenant's hand, after he had done reading it, and run it in my face several times, and asked me, if I was not ashamed to wear a commission under the French scoundrels.

There were on board of this frigate at this time as prisoners, three American captains, who had been captured by her (masters of American merchant vessels), one of whom, by the name of Davis (for damning the king), was dragged to the gangway and whipped by one of the boatswain's mates, upon his naked back, three dozen lashes with a cat o'nine tails, by order of this brute who commanded the frigate. My daily allowance, while on board of her, was half a pound of wormy bread and one pint of water. The irons which I wore, especially those round my ankles, were too small, and occasioned them to swell badly; I often begged of the master at arms and other officers, to take these irons off my ankles and put on those that were larger; but in vain; all the reply which any of them would make me to such a reasonable request was, that they wished they were smaller, and that I was not treated half bad enough; and that I ought to be punished more severely, for fighting against my lawful sovereign, and for accepting of a French commission. 'We

* This officer understood the French language.

will punish you, you Irish rebel.' They would not allow me anything to lie upon, not even a single rag to put under my head. In this situation I lay, hands and feet in irons, upon the naked quarter-deck between two guns, six weeks, where I was almost eat up with vermin. They would drop down from the hammocks, which were suspended over me into my face by scores, and my hands were so confined that I could not brush them off. The officers of the ship, as I learnt afterwards, would not allow any of the American prisoners on board to come near me; and the insult which I was obliged to endure during my confinement in irons, is beyond my power to describe; and why these swaggering Englishmen and others, sailing under the British flag, should upon sundry occasions, insist that I was an Irishman, I never could tell; for sure I am, that my pronunciation could not justify them in such a belief.

One night when we were cruising between the Isle of Wight, and the coast of France, this frigate fell into the very centre of a French fleet of twelve sail of the line, a number of frigates, sloops of war and cutters. The English frigate, after attempting to escape, was captured and about twelve at night I was released from irons by some of the French officers who came on board to take possession of their prize. Never was I so much rejoiced in the whole course of my life, as upon this occasion. I now was sensible that I should have it in my power to revenge the insults that I had experienced from the dastardly English. At daylight in the morning, the French admiral having heard of my sufferings, sent his own barge to transport me on board of the *Invincible* of ninety-eight guns, on board of which was the admiral (the Count de Guichen). Arriving on board, I was introduced to him by one of his lieutenants, into the great cabin; on entering, he arose from his seat, took my hand, which he shook heartily, and then caused me to be seated by him. I had still upon me the frock and trousers, which previous to

this, the French officers wished me to exchange for a decent suit of wearing apparel; for which I tendered them my thanks; but at the same time, I told them that it was my choice to appear in the admiral's presence clad in the garb which I then had on, and on which there were scores of lice. As soon as I was seated by the admiral, I hinted to him my situation on this score, and begged permission before I related to him my story, relative to the cruel treatment of the English towards me, that I might retire into one of the state rooms, in order to shift myself; which he consented to. In the meantime, a boat was dispatched from the admiral's ship, to bring on board the English captain, who had been put on board one of the other ships of the fleet. As soon as I had dressed myself I returned into the cabin, where I found the Count surrounded by several of the principal officers of the fleet; among whom I saw the English captain, who to be sure, looked very sad. I was then requested by the admiral to be seated and relate the usage which I had received from the English; which I did in French, and with as much conciseness as the nature of the subject would admit of; not forgetting to mention what the English captain said he would do with my commission. This occasioned the admiral to let drop some harsh expressions, in regard to the English captain's conduct, after I had finished my relation of the subject in question. The admiral demanded of the captain my commission; and which he produced, and handed to the Count; who, after minuting down my name, and the captain's threats, what he intended doing with it, handed it to me, and told me that whatever the English captain had done to me while a prisoner on board of the ship which he commanded, I had now his permission to order inflicted upon said captain, who now metamorphosed into the most abject, fawning, beggarly fellow which I ever beheld. I did not, upon reflection, make any use of the permission granted me by the admiral, and thus my John Eng-

lishman went unpunished for his barbarous and cruel usage inflicted upon me. But the Count ordered him to restore to me all the effects which had been taken from me by himself, his officers or any of his ship's crew; and in default thereof, he was ordered to pay me the money to the amount of such effects, or so much as was missing; all of which was strictly complied with, on the part of the English captain; but I have reason to believe sorely against his will.

I was directed by the admiral to do duty on board of his ship in the station to which my commission entitled me, during the cruise in the English channel, where we fell in with at one time, eleven sail of English ships of the line, to whom we offered battle, but they declined fighting, and we chased them almost into Spithead. At another time we saw thirteen sail of the line, and to these we offered battle for the space of a whole day, and after night set in they sneaked off, and the day following they took shelter in Plymouth, where they anchored; and off which port we continued three days in a line of battle, without being able to induce the English to get under way and engage us. The fleet, during this cruise, captured several English frigates, sloops of war, and merchantmen.

The French admiral was about sixty years of age, an experienced commander, brave and intrepid, and was a man greatly beloved by his officers and men; and who was in the habit of calling them 'my children'. And every day he made it a custom at dinner time, to go the rounds on board of his ship, among his people, who, (as is customary on board of ships of war) were divided into messes of eight or ten in each, and at each mess, while at dinner, he would ask them if their provisions were good, and if they had enough. And almost always upon these occasions, he used to taste their soup, meats, and wine; which if not good and wholesome, which was seldom the case, he would order them to be served with such as was good.

Our cruise being out, we put into Brest with a number of prizes, where we heard that a general peace would be proclaimed in the course of two months. This induced me to hurry my return to Dunkirk, from whence I expected to make a short cruise before such an event took place. Having this in view, I waited upon the Count de Guichen, and asked leave for a dismission from the navy, for only a couple of months, and which he granted me, after giving me a certificate for the time which I had served on board of the *Invincible*,* and by virtue of which, he said I could, at any time thereafter, call at the custom-house, or admiralty office in Brest, and receive my pay. Besides, the admiral was pleased to give me a handsome recommendation, in a letter to the French minister of the marine department, and promises of future friendship.

After this I set out for Dunkirk, and travelled with the greatest expedition by land night and day. When I arrived there, I found my owners had obtained some time before, spars for the brig's masts, which I found got into the brig, and she nearly fitted for a cruise. The news of peace seemed to gain ground, which urged us to make the utmost dispatch in fitting away the brig, which was ready for sea by the 30th of December, and both officers and men had received the customary bounty or advance from the owners, and were all on board of the privateer; and we were in the act of casting off our fasts from the quay, and had our sails hoisted and set, when proclamation of the preliminaries of peace, signed at Paris by the commissioners, was made in the town of Dunkirk. By this event I lost at least five thousand guineas, which my shares in the brig and bounty money cost me (after deducting for my part of what the brig and her warlike implements brought at auction, after the peace).

* This ship of war was rated a ninety gun ship, but mounted ninety-eight, all brass pieces; those upon her lower gun-deck were forty-two pounders, French weight, nearly equal to forty-eight, English weight.

Another unforeseen misfortune happened to me about this same time, which was this: one evening while I was playing a game of backgammon, at the sign of the White Hart Tavern, kept by one Williamson, two officers of justice entered the room, and arrested me in the king's name, and committed me to gaol, without letting me know what my crime was. I was well acquainted with both of these officers, and I took the liberty to ask wherein I had offended, but they did not make any reply. The next day I was interrogated by some of the officers of the admiralty, and soon afterwards I was liberated from prison, and paid, in behalf of the king, fifteen hundred livres, as a compensation for being imprisoned unjustly; besides a very handsome apology was made to me by the commandant, who had ordered me to be arrested by the king's authority.

The reader will, perhaps, wish to know the cause of my being thus arrested, which is as follows: during the second cruise which I made in the *Eclipse* privateer, we brought to a Danish neutral ship, in the English channel, bound from St. Croix to Copenhagen, and on board of which ship was a French passenger by the name of Segur, brother to Marquis de Segur. This last was high in office under the French king: and besides, one of his greatest favourites. The privateer's boat was ordered to board this neutral ship and examine his papers; and for this purpose I sent my first lieutenant,* and to him I gave strict orders (as has since been proved) not to molest or take anything from any passenger found on board, or to take anything out of the ship, if upon examination of her papers she

* This lieutenant was an American, the same who plundered the young Irish nobleman of a gold watch upon the Irish coast; he was tried, and condemned to be hanged, for robbing the French passenger; and notwithstanding he was absent, yet the officers hung his effigy upon the gallows, erected upon the quay for that purpose, with as great a parade as if he had been present. The troops, officers, and others, assembled upon this occasion was estimated at five thousand. I forbear to mention this fellow's name, for two reasons; first he is dead; and second, he has left a wife and children in Newport, Rhode Island.

proved to be a neutral vessel; and such orders were not only given in this instance, but were always given by me to the officer and boat's crew, whenever they boarded a neutral vessel upon a similar occasion. The fact was that the first lieutenant as aforesaid, plundered the French passenger (Mr. Segur) on board of the Danish ship, of an elegant gold watch, and several other trinkets of considerable value; and which circumstance I was not acquainted with until after I was arrested in Dunkirk, as I have already mentioned. Some considerable time had expired after the foregoing transaction had taken place, when Mr. Segur was on his way from Copenhagen to Paris, he stopped a few hours at Dunkirk to visit some of his acquaintance, and walking upon the quay, he saw the *Eclipse* privateer laid up in the bason; and notwithstanding she was stripped of most of her rigging, and dismantled of most of her guns and warlike apparatus, yet he knew her, and enquired who had been captain of her during her last cruise, and what were the names of his principal officers. After his arrival at Paris, he made a regular complaint (which was joined by one of the Danish court) to the king's ministers; upon which orders were issued for arresting the captain of the *Eclipse* cutter, and all his officers and crew, if to be found in the kingdom of France (the most of whom however, especially the first lieutenant, and those concerned in plundering the French passenger, knowing themselves to be guilty had fled out of the kingdom, as soon as the cruise I have spoken of was finished). Two of the boat's crew, who had been confederates with the lieutenant in this pilfering affair, were also punished by being whipped thirty-nine lashes each, upon the naked back, and branded with the letter R upon their shoulders; and thus ended this tragic business, and which caused me abundance of trouble, and perplexity of mind; all through the agency of a person whom I had advanced from a state of beggary, to be my first lieutenant on board of a privateer which

I commanded; and for this, how did he requite my friendship and generosity? why, he lead me into the snare already described. He went from Dunkirk in the night, without taking his leave of any one, and was pursued by the Marachausses as far as L'Orient, where he had embarked for the U.S. a few days before these officers of justice had arrived at that place. All his prize money was seized upon, and placed at the disposal of the King's officers at Dunkirk.

The ingratitude that this lieutenant was guilty of towards me, is perhaps without parallel in the history of our revolution.* I can say this much, in the *presence of Heaven*, that my conscience was perfectly free from guilt, in every part of my conduct toward neutral vessels, and neutral subjects, during the whole time which I commanded the *Eclipse* privateer.

In consequence of the news of peace, an embargo was immediately laid upon all privateers in this port; and by this revolution in the times, I was now at leisure to go to the public amusements, which are here diversified, and to spend my money, which I had already received at the custom house, amounting to twelve thousand guineas: out of this sum, I had expended, previous to the peace, nearly one-half in owning, and fitting out my proportion of several privateers from this place; and besides, I had advanced my countrymen, in different ports of France, and at different times; altogether, five hundred and fifty guineas, who had fled from British bondage, to a country which was friendly disposed to the United States; but they found themselves among strangers. They were nearly naked, and without money; I therefore, assisted them with heartfelt pleasure and satisfaction, and advanced them such sums as their necessity required.†

* Since which I have frequently experienced the sin of ingratitude, from not only strangers, but near relations.

† Out of the large sum which I advanced to so many I have never since received but 150 dollars from Capt. Manly; and 100 dollars of another person.

I shall now attempt to give my readers a faint description of the town of Dunkirk, its inhabitants, their manners, &c. &c. It lies in lat. 51 deg. 1 min. N. and long. 2 deg. 15 min. E. and is a populous town. The greater part of the inhabitants are Flemish or Fleminders; but none but those who are Frenchmen born, are allowed to fill any considerable posts under the crown. It is situated in the province of Flanders, and in the French Netherlands, on the English channel, at the mouth of the river Coln, fifty miles E.S.E. of Dover. This town in the year 1713, had an excellent port, as I was informed, and was then very strongly fortified; with a dry dock, and other conveniences for ships of war; which were demolished, pursuant to the demands of the English, conformable to the treaty of Utrecht; since which time, only small vessels, such as cutters, brigs, galliots, coasting vessels, &c., can go in and out, in consequence of the shoalness of the water, at the entrance of the port. The town is walled in, but the walls are decaying, and tumbling down in many places, it could not in my opinion, at the present time, hold out three days' siege, against a small regular army, if led on by an able and experienced commander. In the centre of the town stands a tower, said to be three hundred feet high, on the top of which with good spy-glasses, may be discovered ships and other vessels, that go in and out of the river Thames, and which is of very great advantage to the owners of privateers, who reside here in time of war. Upon the top of this tower are displayed signals, which inform the inhabitants of vessels in the offing, what number, and whether friends or enemies, &c. There are but few of the people in the town but who are acquainted with the meaning of the different signals, as soon as they are hoisted. They have a long spying-glass upon the top of the Tower (where there is a small house erected to shelter the persons who are upon the watch or duty, from the weather) through which, it being of a superior kind, one may plainly

see people walking near Dover castle. About one mile east of the town is situate the royal gardens (so called) where there are a number of very delightful walks, and a great many magnificent statues of white marble. In these gardens there are always kept at the public expense, an excellent band of music, consisting of about seventy persons. This music, especially in a still evening, sounds very harmoniously; and I think excels the music at the public theatres, in any part of France where I have been. The manners of the Fleminders are coarse, rude, and disgusting to strangers; and they are for the most part, avaricious; there are notwithstanding found among them, people who are very kind and hospitable to strangers. Among the last class of people, I formed during my residence at Dunkirk, a large circle of acquaintances; among whom I had some of the best friends I have ever found in any part of the world (I do not mean here to except my own and nearest relations). The chief support of these people in time of peace is coasting, fishing, and smuggling; and in time of war, that of privateering,* of which they are very fond; they dress very mean, like the Dutch and Germans. The conveyance of all articles of any considerable bulk, to or from any part of the country, within some hundreds of miles of this town, is in flat bottomed boats, some of which carry eighty tons freight; they are drawn up and down the canals with horses, which travel upon each side of the river (where it is level) and go at the rate of from three to five miles per hour; however, it must be noted, that in descending the canals the boats go much swifter than they do in ascending. There are attached to the largest of these boats, eight and sometimes ten horses, with ropes, and so in proportion to the smaller boats; but I observe they generally put on two extraordinary, in going up the

* They had fitted out from the port of Dunkirk alone, during the late war, one hundred and seventeen sail of privateers (great and small).

river or canals, to great or small boats. I have travelled a great deal in this way; and I remember I was once on board of one of the largest, where one might have anything he called for, the same as at a hotel or tavern. I here dined in state, with a number of gentlemen and ladies; and after dinner we had a ball in the dining-room, while the boat was descending the river at the rate of five miles per hour. Boats which descend the river, are obliged to keep close to the shore upon one side; and those which ascend, close to the other side of the river so as not to interfere with each other. The Austrian Netherlands, a very considerable part of Germany, as well as this province, abounds with canals, and flat bottom boats; and in these boats, the people who travel, prefer doing it to any other way whatsoever.

The manner of hanging criminals in France.

The gallows being erected without the walls of the city or town, and a temporary platform or stage under it upon wheels. The people assemble in crowds around the place of execution. The grand bailiff, or high sheriff, ascends the stage, with the criminal, with a halter around his neck. The former then proclaims aloud to the surrounding multitude, that a hangman, or Jack Ketch is wanting; and expresses himself as follows: 'Who will execute this person now to be hanged! (Par le Roy.)* Will any one do it? and for what price? Let him come forward, and mount the stage with me! Will he do it for one crown? Will he do it for two? will he do it for three!' And so on, adding one crown more to every bid, till it often amounts to one hundred or more. And in fact, I once knew an instance of the sheriff's giving five hundred crowns to procure a Jack Ketch; but this was an extraordinary instance, as it is quite common to procure one for ten crowns. As soon as the hang-

* By the king, or by the king's authority.

man mounts the stage, the bailiff descends from it, and the populace cry out *bravo.* The hangman then makes the halter fast to the gallows, adjusts the halter round the criminal's neck, and makes a signal with his hand, or handkerchief; a number of people at that instant, drag the stage from under the hangman and criminal; and the former jumps up on the shoulders of the latter, and they both continue swinging in the air for some time; during which the hangman exercises himself with pounding the criminal in the stomach, and under the ribs, with first one knee and then the other, with all his might, till he is well assured that he is dead. He then lets go his hold and drops down upon his feet, goes to the high bailiff, who pays him the price agreed upon. The criminal, after hanging a couple of hours, is cut down and delivered to his friends. But I was told that the practice of delivering the body of a criminal, after he has been executed, to surgeons for dissection, so common in England, is never done in France; and the people of this country look upon the practice with the greatest abhorrence.

The manner of hanging or executing criminals in Germany.

A large post, planted in the ground, of about ten feet in height; at the foot of which, and upon the east side, two and sometimes three stone steps are placed for this purpose, which I saw near almost every town or city which I passed through in my travels in this country. The sheriff, the criminal, and the hangman (for here it appears the hangman is engaged before hand) arrive at the post. The criminal then, with the assistance of Jack Ketch, walks up the steps, and the latter turns him round with his back against the post,* to which the criminal is secured with lines, so that he can-

* In the post are scooped out hollow places for the back part of the head to fit into; these are of different heights from the upper step.

not move his body, or stir his hands or feet. The hangman now appears with his instruments of death in his hands; in one hand he holds a rope with the two ends spliced together, just long enough to reach, when doubled together, around both the post and the criminal's neck, so that the two bites of the rope will meet upon the back part of the post. In the other hand he holds a toggle or short piece of wood, about as large, but not so long, as a common ax helve. Thus prepared, he waits for the signal to be given by the officer of justice. At the back of the post there is upon these occasions, a temporary stage erected, for the hangman to stand upon, in order to execute the criminal, and where he stands when the signal is given; and when this is given by the officer of justice, by waving a white handkerchief in the air, the hangman instantly puts the rope around the criminal's neck and post, as before observed; and through the bites of the rope he puts the toggle of wood, and then lays hold with one hand at one end of it, and the other hand hold of the other end, and twirls or twists it about with the rapidity almost of a whirl-a-gig. In this manner, the poor criminal is not long a dying; after which the body (a few minutes after execution) is cut away from the post, and delivered to the friends of the deceased; and in some instances, the bodies of criminals, as in England, are delivered to surgeons for dissection. I never saw but one criminal hung in this way, and he was a Jew, who was executed near Ostend, for forgery; and when travelling in Germany, I was informed by the Germans themselves, that this mode of executing criminals, was generally practised throughout the emperor of Germany's dominions.

In Dunkirk, as well as in all other towns in France, sales at auction are common, and in the king's name. Previous to which a sergeant, drummer, and two soldiers, with their arms, go through the streets, and make the tour of every square in the town or city

where the articles are to be sold. The sergeant carries in one hand a printed list of said articles, and at the corner of every square, the drummer beats his drum, while the soldiers stand with their muskets and bayonets fixed for the space of a minute, when the sergeant flourishes his cane in the air, and proclaims aloud with an audible voice, 'Par le Roy,' and at the same instant pulls off his hat,* and reads over the articles which are to be sold, and names the time and place; after this he puts on his hat, and the drummer beats again for about the same space of time, when the sergeant makes another flourish with his cane; the drumming then ceases, and they march off to the next corner or street, and repeat the same manoeuvres, and so on, till they have gone through as above.

On the 26th of July, I left Dunkirk for Paris, and went as far as the city of Lisle† by water in one of those flat bottomed boats, which I have already described, and on board of which I was well accommodated for victuals, drink (the best of claret, and other wines) and lodging, as any one could be served with at a public inn. I arrived at Lisle in the evening, and put up at a celebrated hotel, which I found full of people, mostly foreigners. This city is very large and populous, and situate in lat. 50 deg. N. and in about the same long. as Dunkirk. Abundance of English people resort here in peaceable times; and where the English language is prevalent among the citizens of quality. There are a great many of the former who are inhabitants, and who had resided here for a number of years, and who are said to be very rich. This city is celebrated on account of its manufactories of rich laces of all kinds, and the best of any that are to be had in the kingdom. The citizens are kind and hospitable to strangers; their dwelling houses are neat and com-

* Woe be to the man who is near the sergeant, who does not pull off his hat, on the sergeant's pronouncing the words 'Par le Roy.' He would have a bayonet plunged into his body, for a neglect of lifting his hat when the king's name was pronounced.

†Lille.—[Ed.]

modious, not very high, and no great shew of grandeur appears attached to them. The next day I proceeded on my journey towards the city of Paris; and travelled very rapidly in the public stages, with six horses to each, at the rate of twelve, and sometimes fifteen miles per hour; the public roads being excellent. They are very wide upon one side, and often in the middle they are paved with round stones, and travellers may have their choice, either to go up the pavement, or upon one side, where the road is not paved. Those in the stage or other carriages, have only to direct the coachman to drive along which of these they please, and the coachman will always comply; as they are, for the most part, very obliging and condescending to their passengers; and who generally pay him ten or a dozen sous each, at the end of each stage (being from ten to twelve miles distance from each other) where the stage, horses and coachman are shifted or relieved; at the entrance of the stage (which he is driving) to the next town or village, where the stage and horses are to be shifted; and until he arrives at the very stop where this is to take place, he keeps up a particular kind of cracking and snapping of his whip to denote that he has got a generous set of passengers; but if they should not be of this description, the coachman makes no cracking as above, with his whip. There are two different ways for persons to travel on horseback in this country; one is the King's Post, so called; and the other is called Les Postes de Matelots (or the sailors' post). The first furnishes the traveller with an excellent horse, a pair of large boots, which one can draw over his own with ease, a pair of spurs, and a servant or guide, who is mounted upon another horse of equal goodness; and thus equipped, one may go at the rate of eighteen miles per hour, or as much slower as he pleases. The Poste de Matelots furnishes miserable horses, no servant or guide. For the first of these posts, it costs one six sous per mile, for horse hire; and for the last four sous.

The internal regulation of the police in France deserves to be noticed. The grand superintendent of this institution resides in Paris, who has a great number of subordinate officers under him, scattered over the face of the kingdom. Besides these, there are several thousand of what the French call Marachausses,* and who are under the control, and receive their orders from the lieutenant of the police, or his subordinate officers. The greater part of these Marachausses are the younger sons of noblemen; they wear an uniform of blue with red facings, red cuffs, red waistcoat and pantaloons; and upon the left sleeve of their coats just above the cuff, they wear a piece of gold lace, which extends round the arm of the coat about an inch broad. These Marachausses are mounted upon excellent horses, armed with a pair of large pistols, a long broad sword, and sometimes a short light horseman's musket slung to their backs; and thus accoutred, their duty is to scour the public roads continually, to apprehend and secure highway robbers, to take up deserters and criminals who flee from justice, or who make their escape from gaols, &c. These Marachausses are sometimes called officers of justice; they are paid for their services by the king, which I am told is very considerable, enough to support them to live in the characters of gentlemen. They travel upon the public roads, two, four, six, and sometimes ten together; and in travelling which, you will scarcely ever be out of sight of some of them, as they ride night and day. And in consequence of this regulation, they disguise themselves in such a manner, as not to be known by those whom they are in pursuit of; and this kind of police extends itself throughout the whole kingdom of France; insomuch that it is a rare thing to hear of a highway robbery being committed in this country; nor even the crimes of house-breaking or shop-lifting,

* Maréchaussée—the force known as the Provost-Marshal's guard, in the American and English armies.

are scarcely heard of. And during my residence in France, I never once heard of a highway robbery or burglary being committed.

It was on the 28th of July, 1788, at night, when I arrived at the city of Paris; and the next day I visited and paid my respects to Dr. Franklin,* who then resided at a small village, situate upon an eminence, between Paris and Versailles, which commands a prospect delightfully pleasing to the eye. This pleasant village is called Passy, three miles distance from Paris, and about six miles from Versailles. The building in which the Doctor resides, with his secretaries, is a noble piece of modern architecture, large and commodious, and adjoining which is a beautiful garden. From this village may be seen nearly the whole of the city of Paris and its suburbs, and nearly three hundred walled towns, besides a great number of noblemen's villas, which have the appearance of so many palaces and country-seats, scattered over the country as far as you can extend the eye. Dr. Franklin received me without any ceremony, but with the kindness of a parent; and in this way he conducted himself towards all the Americans, whom he was in the habit of calling his children. I found in company with him, the marquis de la Fayette, and several other gentlemen; and as soon as they were gone (which was in about half an hour after my arrival) the Doctor asked me to follow him into his study; and after being seated, he held a long conversation with me upon different subjects, and when I was about leaving him, he invited me to call and see him often, and gave me good advice, relative to the conduct which I ought to observe while I resided at Paris, and in the same familiar style as though he had been my father, and for which I shall al-

* This is the man to whom Peter Porcupine gave the nickname of *old lightning rod*, and said that he never filled a junck bottle full of electrical fire in his life. Others also, who were always enemies to the United States, have followed Peter's example since the Doctor's death, in endeavoring to undervalue this eminent and able statesman, and to erase from the minds of the American people, his well earned and deserved popularity; which, notwithstanding the ravings of his enemies, will endure till time shall be no longer.

ways revere him as long as I live. At this time Dr. Franklin was highly esteemed, not only by the French, but by all the foreign ministers resident at the Court of France, and his levee, for number and respectability, every day exceeded that of the count de Vergennes, the king's favourite, and the American people's friend. After the first interview with this American sage and statesman, I called often upon him, and he always treated me with the same kindness and friendship as he did at my first visit. He was upon all occasions dressed remarkably plain, for which all classes of people esteemed him the more. I visited nearly all this great and populous city, where there were any natural or artificial curiosities to be seen, for several days successively. The Place Victoire (place of victory) was among the first of curiosities which arrested my attention. It is near the centre of the city, and occupies about half an acre in a square form; and directly in the centre of this is a statue of Lewis XIV. standing upon a marble pedestal, with a truncheon in his right hand, the other clasped to his waist, represented in his royal robes, but without a crown on his head. An angel is represented as having a light, and one foot set upon his pedestal, and with his right hand is in the act of crowning this monarch with a laurel wreath, which he holds just above his head. At each corner of the pedestal are represented four kings, which the French say, Lewis XIV took prisoners in his wars, all at this monarch's feet in chains, with their crowns, coats of armour, and other badges of royalty, lying by them. This chef douvre is composed of bronze, a composition of metal, but resembles copper. This monarch is represented on horseback, as large as life. At another place the horse, and the king upon him, standing upon a marble pedestal, elevated about twelve feet from the pavement, at the Place Vendome. There is also nigh the old palace gates, a statue of a horse, and a representation of Lewis XV, mounted upon him upon a pedes-

tal, at the four corners of which are represented four female figures, in allusion to the four cardinal virtues; but some say these represent his four mistresses, who were sisters, and were said to be great beauties; but let this be as it may, this much is a known fact, that Lewis XV with all his faults, was a monarch universally beloved by his subjects, during the whole of his reign; and for this substantial reason, he was called Lewis the beloved. These statues are also composed of bronze. Not far from this are les champs Elisce, or Elysian Fields, containing about twenty acres of ground, planted with beautiful trees, and divided into the most delightful walks which I had ever seen, ornamented with the greatest variety of arbours, artificially made, and which are pleasantly shaded, and in which one may be accommodated with whatever one desireth, either eatables or drinkables. Here may be seen in the latter part of the day and evening, when the weather is clear and serene, several thousands of the nobility, gentry and others; who generally tarry here till it is time for the plays and operas to begin, which is at 6 o'clock in the evening. However, a considerable part of this large company continue to amuse themselves in these delightful walks until 10, and often, if the evening is pleasant, till 12 at night. It is my opinion, which coincides with that of many others, that the city of Paris occupies more ground than London. The dwelling houses and public buildings are mostly higher, and the architecture better in the first mentioned than in the last. The streets, however, are not to be compared with those in London. They are here, for the most part, both narrow and crooked, and very dirty, and nothing prevents people on foot from being run over by coaches, but that of sheltering one's self in the houses or shops, upon either side of the streets. Whereas in London, foot passengers can there walk upon each side of the streets on the flags, with the greatest of safety, as the pavements in that city are raised pretty high in the middle of the

streets, in order to be dry; and on the right hand, and on the left of these, the pavement is of flat stones, raised about eighteen inches above the common pavements; this accommodates those that are on foot. On account of the streets in this city being always so very dirty, the greater part of the male citizens wear black silk stockings, and which are always fashionable on the same account. The city is divided into two parts by the river Seine, which after running about three hundred miles, empties itself into the English channel, near Havre de Grace, which is the nearest seaport to the capital of any in the kingdom. There are several old decayed palaces in this city, where the ancient kings of France used to reside. The display of riches in this city, are not to be compared with those to be seen in London.

The duke de Charters has lately built a palace near the centre of the city, which has cost him an immense sum of money, and which is a very magnificent one, and far excels, in my opinion, that built by Lewis XIV. where the present king now resides, for elegance, beauty, and grandeur. But this is not to be wondered at, since, it is said, that the former is the richest prince in Europe. The comedies and operas are much grander here than in London; and the people who frequent these places are more magnificently dressed here, than those who visit such places in the last mentioned city.

The Bastile, situate not far from the Thuelliries, is a large pile of buildings, and is a very strong fortress; said to be impregnable. It is in this castle where the prisoners of state are confined, and where I endeavoured to gain admittance, but without success. There are a great number of hospitals in the city, which are large and commodious buildings. Having entered several, I was not a little surprised to observe the cleanliness and regularity of the sick in general, as well as every kind of conveniency in the inside of them, kept in a very neat manner. This I say, surprised me, because I

never saw before among the French, anything respecting their victuals, household furniture, and the like, but was always in a very dirty condition. I visited the hospital where all such persons who have the venereal disease are admitted and taken care of. But from what I saw I rather think that many poor miserable wretches are brought here for the purpose of the French surgeons to try experiments upon. I was told that that whole numbers of these people in this hospital, which is a large and expensive pile of buildings, amounted to six thousand, of both sexes. Among those that I saw (excepting such as were confined to their beds) there was not a single one but what was deformed, and drawn out of their natural shapes from the effect of mercury. I saw one with his face turned over his back, where the back part of his head ought to be; another without a nose; a third without any eyes; a fourth his joints dislocated, &c. From such objects of horror and disgust I turned away my eyes, reflecting seriously upon what I had seen. After remaining in this hospital, till I was almost poisoned with the stench of these people, I retired from it and went into another called L'Hospital D'Enfans trouvé (foundling hospital,) so named, by its containing about seven thousand children who are fed, clothed, and educated till they are fifteen years of age, when they are set adrift in the wide world to seek a livelihood; all at the expense of a certain French noblewoman, whose name I have mislaid, as I had taken it down with a pencil at the time it was told to me. They are poor children, and the greater part of them are foundlings. There are numbers picked up in the streets naked as when they were born, almost every morning.

The next thing which attracted my attention was seeing a fellow exceedingly well dressed, holding up the trail of a lady's gown, as she walked the street. This I supposed, was to prevent its being dirtied or soiled. Soon after I perceived the lady, on

entering a house, give him something, which he received, made a low bow and retired. I asked my conductor what this meant; who laughing, told me there were a number of this class of men in the city, who lived upon the ladies' bounty;* that they all went genteelly dressed, wore their swords, and that they were maintained by the ladies of all ranks, who most commonly put themselves under their protection, while walking in the streets, to prevent being insulted by any one, and to preserve their silks and cloths from the filth, which always lies upon the pavements. These fellows are most intolerably proud and are called *petit maitres*, or little masters (coxcombs). The dwelling houses in this city are from one to twelve stories high, built mostly with white hewn stones, and floors of marble, of different colours; in consequence of which it is a rare thing to hear of a fire in France, which often makes such destruction among wooden buildings in other countries. Versailles is a small town to the westward of Paris, where the palace of Lewis XVI. is built; and where the present royal family reside. It is a perfect square, except to the southward, where it is fenced or piqueted in, from one wing to the other across, with a double gate in the middle, which is open during the daytime, but shut at night. Two grenadiers are generally posted here; and no person, except the royal family, can pass through this gate, without the password or countersign, named by the king. This palace is a large pile of buildings, and the architecture of the whole is magnificent and neatly executed. The enclosure between the two wings forms a square piece of ground, handsomely paved, where the king's life guard parade. When I arrived here I put up at the hotel near the palace gates, where I met with an old acquaintance, who had been in the French navy, a captain of one of the ships of the line, in the division of men

*A lady generally gives to one of these fellows twelve sous for gallanting them from house to house; and in this kind of business they have full employ.

of war, the admiral of which, was the Count of Guichen, whom I have, in a few pages back, had occasion to notice. To this marine officer (the captain) I mentioned the curiosity which I had to see the royal family, and who agreed to accompany me wherever I had a mind to go; he was a young nobleman, and was well acquainted at court. With this gentleman I set out from our lodgings, in order to visit the apartments in the palace, and to see the royal family. Arriving at the gates (my conductor having first obtained the password) the guard made some difficulty about our entering the palace yard, notwithstanding we mentioned the countersign; in consequence of which an explanation took place between my conductor and the officer of the king's life guard. The former told the latter that I was an American, and had been in the French service; and that I was led there merely out of curiosity to see the royal family, &c. After this he was so obliging as to accompany us to the king's chapel adjoining the palace, where I saw the king and queen, and dauphin, then an infant. The royal family had come into the chapel to hear mass (it being Sunday morning). The king is a very handsome man, about twenty-eight years of age, dark complexion, about a middling size, corpulent body; and has an exceeding pleasant but majestic countenance. The queen is beautiful in the extreme, has a Roman nose, light complexion, and a pleasant countenance; but I am sorry to say, that her character for goodness, modesty, virtue, and other female accomplishments, necessary in a queen, does not bear the strictest scrutiny. And were I to relate all the anecdotes which I heard while in Paris, of her intrigues and voluptuousness with the men, it would compose a volume; particularly her inconstancy to the king. Some even go so far as to say, that the Count D'Artois, his youngest brother, is the father of the present dauphin of France. At a short distance from Versailles is an island, either in a lake or situate in a bay, contiguous

to the river Seine. However, let this be as it may, there is certainly such an island, and to which the queen has given the name of the Island of Love. To this island she often resorts with some of the loosest characters of the ladies of the court for the purpose of bathing; the Count D'Artois as her gallant, and other gentlemen for partners of the ladies.* I forbear to say anything more upon this subject; but leave the reader to make his own reflections. From the king's chapel we proceeded on to the great hall of audience, and through the other apartments in the palace; from whence we visited the royal gardens, and a pond of water nearby, in which were represented Tygers, Lions, and a great variety of other savage beasts, and various kinds of serpents. These were continually spouting water out of their mouths into the air, several feet upwards, which made a roaring noise, resembling the fall of a rapid water. Near these water-spouts is a delightful walk, where I again saw the royal family, with several gentlemen of the court; among whom was the Count D'Artois, and the Count de Vergennes. The former is a much handsomer man than the king, and appeared to be several years younger. The palace at Versailles is situate upon an eminence, which, together with the palace, was built by order of Louis XIV. and is said to excel any other in the known world. I was told by the officers of the king's life guard, that the spot of ground where the elegant palace now stands, was formerly a piece of low sandy land, and that the expense of raising the ground only, on which it is founded, cost the French government several million of livres. The dwelling houses of the village of Versailles are not so high nor elegant as those at Paris; nor are they so crowded with families. In the latter place, the houses are fourteen stories high, in most of which there are a family in each story.

*The queen, upon these occasions, acts the part of Venus, as the leading goddess of the company.

On the 9th of August, I returned to Paris, and waited upon his excellency Dr. Franklin, who gave me a passport for L'Orient. The next day I paid my respects to Mr. Barckley,* consul general of the United States; and with whom I left a power of attorney to collect monies due to me from merchants residing in Morlaix and Dunkirk. After having finished my business with him, I agreed for a seat in the public stage, and set out for L'Orient, and in four days I arrived at that place, and engaged a passage on board a king's packet, a ship mounting four carriage guns, which in the late war mounted twenty-two. While I was here waiting for the packet to get ready for sea, I was attacked with the ague and fever, and which I did not get rid of till we had put to sea.

I shall now, as having some leisure moments, take some notice of the manners and customs of the French generally. The young unmarried ladies in this country I certainly think handsomer than the single ladies in England, though more giddy and volatile, which in my opinion, they carry to too great an extreme; particularly in their dancing assemblies, a diversion of which they are remarkably fond. The ladies in France have no tea parties, as in England and the United States. They however, meet together in companies† at each other's houses, and after chatting a while, the company is served with some delicious cakes, fruit, &c., and a few glasses of French cordials of a superior kind. This, instead of tea, constitutes their repast, and which is far wholesomer than that article. The French ladies and gentlemen commonly make their breakfast with wine, bread and butter; and sometimes they add to these sallad, garlic or onions. Their heartiest meal in the twenty-four hours is supper. They have a method of hanging up poultry of all kinds after it is killed, and before the entrails are taken out, and letting

* Thomas Barclay.—[Ed.)

† In the afternoon and generally spend the evening.

it hang until it is quite green before it is cooked. They say it makes fowl and other poultry more tender and easier to digest; which mode, I must confess, I do not like. Another mode is quite common among these people; and that is, stuffing a leg of mutton or veal full of garlic before it is roasted—this I did not much approve of. I have seen many a Frenchman make his dinner or supper out of bread, wine and sallad, and sometimes soup alone; when at the same time there has been twenty meat dishes and fricasees on the table at which he sat. The French are, notwithstanding these little peculiarities, a hospitable, generous, and kind people, especially to strangers. As proof of this, I have travelled many a mile in France without paying one sou for victuals or drink; and upon these occasions, I had only to shew the people wherever I called or put up, my passport, in which I was generally called an American, and they would absolutely refuse to take any pay from me, either for victuals, drink, or lodgings.

They have a custom, which takes place once a year, in all the large populous cities and towns of this country; which, if I mistake not, is sometimes in the month of April, when a representation of the trial, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Saviour is made; but any description which I could give, would fall short of the real scenes exhibited upon this occasion. The reader, therefore, is de-. sired to be content with the following outlines:

At the commencement of this solemn scene, a temporary building is generally erected upon the public square, in which the judge, representing the person who passed sentence of death upon Jesus Christ, sits in a superb chair richly ornamented; the trial then commences, and lasts two or three hours, during which there are persons who act their different parts, so as to represent all those who were any way accessory to his death, or who had been his fol-

lowers, and so on to the committing of his body* to the place of burial. After the resurrection, a grand procession is formed of all ranks of people, the Roman Catholic priests in the front, one of whom carries in his hands a large silver font or vessel, in the form of an urn, in which is the *Host*. In or near the centre of the procession, is carried upon men's shoulders, a most magnificent pavilion, in which are seated several images; but who they represent I know not. And besides, owing to the curtains at the sides and end, which are partly drawn together, I had but a slight view of these images, and I always upon such an occasion, withdrew into some house, to avoid the crowd and shun the soldiers. The whole of the military in the town or city where this show is exhibited, are obliged to attend, except such as are unable to walk. The young ladies from six years old and upwards, are for the most part dressed in white, upon the occasion. The procession moves on slowly without any music, the citizens in the middle of the street, and the soldiery upon each side of them, which crowds the street quite full of people. The soldiers march with their muskets and bayonets fixed. And woe be to the person at such a time, who should not drop upon his marrow bones in the street, muddy or dusty, it makes no difference; down he must kneel, and there remain in that posture, until the greater part of the procession is past; or have a bayonet through his body. And I was told, that soldiers upon such an occasion, have orders to kill every one who neglects to kneel.

After the procession has gone through the principal streets of the city or town, as the case may be, which sometimes takes up almost a whole day, they return to the place from whence they first set out, and the people disperse to their respective homes, where they spend the rest of the day, and part of the night following, in congratulations and rejoicings; and which is in some places kept

* Which is made of sundry materials, so as to have the appearance of a man.

up for two or three days and nights successively. But what becomes of the images after the procession is over I was not able to learn.

The winters, in the northern parts of France, are not in my opinion, so cold, nor does the snow fall so often, nor so deep as in Charleston, South Carolina, in the same season of the year; and I never saw the snow two inches deep on a level even in Dunkirk, the most northerly part of France, during my residence there part of three winters; nor are the frosts so severe in the last mentioned place, in that season, as they are in Charleston.

The French are remarkably fond of their king, so much so, that they almost worship the mere sound of his name. They generally say he is the best which they ever had, not even excepting Henry IV.

I have often heard the English say, that the French were great cowards, particularly their sailors. In reply to which, I say it is not true. On the contrary, I assert, that they are as brave and courageous as the English sailors, or any others, be they of what nation they may. I have been an eye witness to their bravery in many instances. While I was cruising in French privateers, I used to make it a rule in stationing the men to the carriage guns, to put the French sailors together, and the American sailors also together; that is, to place, say five French to one gun, and the same number of Americans to the next; and so on in this way, there would be Frenchmen to every other gun; and in time of action, I always noticed, that the French behaved with as much courage and bravery and fired their pieces as often as the Americans; and in several bloody battles that I was in, I never once saw a Frenchman flinch or desert his quarters; but I have, at the same time, seen many an Englishman desert his.

On the 30th day of Sept. I embarked on board of the French

ship which I had agreed to go to the United States in, and paid the captain twenty-eight guineas for my passage and stores. In the after part of the day we set sail for New York, with a fair wind. There were a number of ladies and gentlemen; among the latter was a Mr. St. John,* French consul general for the states of New York, Connecticut, and New Jersey, a man of about sixty years of age, and who spoke good English; a Frenchman, vice consul for the state of Virginia, and his lady; a Mr. Thatcher, an American who had been secretary to an American Ambassador; and another American, by the name of Robinson,† with whom I had served on board of the *Alliance* frigate. Both of us at that time were midshipmen on board of that ship. The third day after we left L'Orient, which was the day that my ague and fever ought to have returned, (having what is commonly called the third day ague), I did not experience another attack, and from this time it entirely forsook me; and from that time we had a very pleasant and agreeable passage, until we got soundings upon the back of Long Island, in 60 fathoms of water; after which, until our arrival, we had repeated gales of wind, and the weather was very cold and boisterous. The greater part of the French sailors, were unable to do duty, on account of being afflicted with the foul disease, in consequence of which they could not endure the cold, and the fatigues of a watch, and we were driven off the coast several times. Mr. Robinson and myself were now called upon to keep a watch, take our turn at the helm, and to do duty on board of the ship as seamen until our arrival, for which, we were promised, by Mr. St. John and the captain, that we should have the money, which we paid the latter in L'Orient, remitted us on the arrival of the ship in any part of the United States.‡ Although we performed the services required of

* This was J. Hector St. John Crévecoeur, author of *Letters from an American Farmer.*
† See page 118.
‡ This promise was never fulfilled.

us night and day faithfully, so much so, that Mr. St. John, whenever it blew a gale, would not let us sleep below in our state-rooms, even when it was our watch below; and at such a time he was so timid, that he would not be content unless we were both upon deck; making it a point, which he never deviated from, when the wind blew fresher than a common wholesail breeze, to keep a constant thumping at our state-room doors, until he urged us to turn out and go upon deck; calling us his dear children, good fellows, &c. At this time there were only three French sailors on board of this ship who did their duty, out of fourteen. When the topsails were to be reefed, or sail taken in, Robinson and myself were obliged to take the lead, and the bulk of such duty fell upon us; and in the bad weather, one of us was under the necessity of taking the helm. And when we arrived, our hands were so sore, in consequence of such severe duty, which we had been compelled to perform, that we could scarcely touch a rope. They talked of bearing away for the West Indies, several times; and where the captain of the ship would have directed her course, had it not been for our assistance.

About the middle of November, we descried in the Western board, the first division of the British fleet, from New York, with troops on board. Soon after, we spoke with several of them; out of one of which we got a New York pilot, which was a lucky circumstance to him, otherwise he must have gone to Halifax, whither the fleet were bound. We were then upon the southernmost part of the south shoal of Nantucket Island. Four days after we arrived at the Hook. No pen, I am sure, could describe the joy I experienced in once more beholding my native land. The next day we proceeded on to New York; passed the British fleet of men of war, and transports,* wearing a French ensign and pendant, and came to anchor in the East River, opposite the city. We had just got

* Then lying at Staten Island.

our sails handed, when a boat from the British admiral's ship* came along side of our ship, with a lieutenant in her; he came up the ship's side, and asked in an arrogant and haughty style, where the captain was; who, hearing, made his appearance upon the quarter-deck. The lieut. then asked him, how he dared to wear his pendant, when he saw the admiral's flag flying below. The French captain replied, that he had nothing to do with the British admiral; he knew nothing about him, nor did he care anything about him; his business was with the American commander in chief, in New-York. "Won't you order your pendant hauled down then?" says the lieutenant. "No," replied the French captain. "Then I'll find a way to make you, and that very soon too," replied the lieutenant. And after pronouncing these words, he descended the ship's side ladder, stepped into his boat, and returned to the British fleet. In the interim, the French captain went on shore, and got permission of the American commander in chief, who, I think, at that time, was the great Washington, to wear his pendant; and felt entirely secure in braving the threats and future conduct of the British. Accordingly, he paraded his marines upon the quarterdeck, consisting of ten in number, with arms in their hands, and ordered them to shoot the first man who attempted to haul the pendant down. The passengers and sailors upon this occasion were also armed; and we were resolved to give the British a warm reception. The English lieutenant soon after came alongside again, accompanied by another boat; both were full of men, and appeared to be well armed. He did not come out of the boat this time; but told the captain, that it was the admiral's orders, that the pendant in question, should be hauled down. The French captain said, Very well, haul it down, if that is your orders. The lieutenant then ordered some

*I think the admiral's name was Digby, who then commanded the fleet.

of his people to haul it down. When they had got upon the ship's gangway, the marines presented their pieces at them; when they skulked into their boats again, and after a few threats from the lieutenant, the boats returned from whence they came, and the French ship continued to wear her pendant.

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